

IS EDUCATION the PANACEA for  
GENDER INEQUALITY in the LABOR MARKET? :  
A CASE STUDY of TURKEY

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Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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# **ABSTRACT**

**IS EDUCATION the PANACEA for GENDER INEQUALITY in the LABOR MARKET? : A CASE STUDY of TURKEY**

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The main aim in this study is to criticize the prevalent method of approach of the mainstream economics to women's problems. The mainstream approach to women's problems is to emphasize exclusively the significance of education, and participation in work-force, and which defines issues of equality/inequality in terms of economic advantages and externalities. Ensuring gender equality has historically never been the mainspring agenda of governments; and the problems of women have mainly been considered in terms of bringing women into the public sphere. This document examines the situation of women in the Turkish labor market, to see to what extent education helps women exceed their roles of the conventional sexual division of labor in the labor market. The limits of the effect of higher educational degree on the improvement of women's position within the market mechanism are discussed. We found that despite its importance, education on its own is inadequate to secure gender equality in both private and public sphere.

**Keywords:** Women, Education, Sexual Division of Labor, Labor Market

# ÖZ

## EĞİTİM EMEK PİYASASINDA TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET EŞİTSİZLİĞİ İÇİN GERÇEKTEN ÇÖZÜM MÜ? : TÜRKİYE ÖRNEĞİ

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Bu çalışmada temel amaç, yaygın iktisadi anlayışın kadınlara dair mevcut tutumunu eleştirmektir. Yaygın yaklaşım eşitlik ve/ veya eşitsizlik meselelerini iktisadi avantaj ve dışsallıklar ekseninde ele alır ve yalnızca eğitimin ve işgücüne katılımın önemini vurgular. Toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini sağlamak, tarihsel olarak, hiçbir zaman hükümetlerin esas gündemini oluşturmamıştır; kadınlara dair sorunlar ancak kadın emeğini piyasa ekonomisi içine çekmek bakımından dikkate değer görülmektedir. Bu tez, eğitimin kadınlara emek piyasası içinde geleneksel cinsler arası iş bölümündeki rollerini aşmakta ne derece yardımcı olduğunu görmek adına, Türkiye’de emek piyasası içinde kadınların durumunu incelemektedir. Daha yüksek bir eğitim seviyesinin, kadınların piyasa mekanizması içindeki durumlarının iyileşmesi üzerindeki etkisinin kısıtları tartışılmaktadır. Önemine rağmen eğitimin, kendi başına ne özel ne de kamusal alanda toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini sağlamak için yeterli olduğu görülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadın, Eğitim, Cinsler Arası İş Bölümü, Emek Piyasası

To Meryem Kutlu, mom's youth

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Received development theories and policies fail women in “underdeveloped” countries in various ways. The standard developmentalists’ interest in the problems of the “third world” women is primarily motivated by a perception that women are instrumental resources to attain population control, increased food production, low cost labour force etc. There is little concern, at the official level, with the problems faced by “third world” women. The emphasis has always been on the benefits from women as far as an economic investment is concerned. Women have been treated as if they were a means of production. Creating gender equality in itself has never been the main goal of development planning regarding women. This document examines this phenomenon and intends to expose this situation.

### **1.1. The Concern of the Thesis**

The main concern of the thesis is to investigate whether modern development policies seeking the improvement of human capital, specifically through the education of women, are contributing to the improvement of women’s social and economic conditions relative to men’s.

According to the mainstream agenda, gender equality has mainly been argued within the terms of “equality before law” and “equality of opportunity”. The principle of equality before the law is defined in Article 10 of the Constitutional Law of the Republic of Turkey as below;

All individuals are equal without any discrimination before the law, *irrespective of language, race, colour, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such considerations*. No privilege shall be granted to any individual, family, group or class. State organs and administrative authorities shall act in compliance with the principle of equality before the law in all their proceedings.<sup>1</sup>

The concept of equality before law and equality of opportunity, however, are unsatisfactory to assure satisfactory gender equality. We do not have gender equality in Turkey.<sup>2</sup> In order for description of equality to come down to earth, it must be assumed that all groups defending their own interests have equal access to the institutions and resources of the nation state. This is not the actuality of existence in nation states. Having a right on paper and enjoying it are wide apart from each other in reality. In its present form, this formalized perception of equality keeps the prevalent class, race, and gender-based inequalities out of the debate.

Furthermore, pursuing one's legal remedies gets difficult especially for poorer sector of the population such as agricultural workers and the ones who are employed in the informal economy. These groups are out of the coverage of the industrial relations legislation and social security system. Although, in the Article 2 of the Constitutional Law of the Republic of Turkey, which defines the characteristics of the Republic, Turkey is said to be a "social state", it is not in accordance with the facts. According to the 2006 findings half of the total population and every three out of five female employees were deprived of any social security coverage-- that is, the basic requirement for having a life fitting with human dignity. Article 5 of the Constitutional Law of the Republic of Turkey, which defines the fundamental aims and duties of the state, is as below:

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<sup>1</sup>For the full text of the Constitutional Law of the Republic of Turkey, see: <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/mevzuat/anayasa/anayasa-ing.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Any doubt can be erased by a quick glance at the United Nations' Human Development Report 2006, which is available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR06-complete.pdf>

The fundamental aims and duties of the state are; to safeguard the independence and integrity of the Turkish Nation, the indivisibility of the country, the Republic and democracy; to ensure the welfare, peace, and happiness of the individual and society; *to strive for the removal of political, social and economic obstacles* which restrict the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual in a manner *incompatible with the principles of justice and of the social state governed by the rule of law; and to provide the conditions required for the development of the individual's material and spiritual existence.*<sup>3</sup>

One aspect of this paradox is to expect people, who lack the basic means and rights to lead a decent life, to meet the high costs of education that are rising year by year due to the commercialization of the education system. Presenting education as the basic solution for ending gender inequalities embedded in society requires approaching this long term project with its all aspects. However, the absence of time-bound, multi-dimensional, and clearly defined public policy makes the problem personalized. Furthermore, education has not been emphasized for its effect on weakening the false perceptions about women and the dogma of the traditional roles of women, but for its effects on improving marketable acquirements, so to say, human capital.

This misperception concerning women's problems has been embodied in history for centuries. The 'famous' feminists who basically represented the middle and upper class women, namely Mary Astell in the seventeenth century, Mary Wollstonecraft and Judith Murray in the eighteenth century, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and John Stuart Mill in the nineteenth century, Ester Boserup, Irene Tinker, Michelle Bo Bramsen and Barbara Rogers in the twentieth century, have all argued for education as the opportunity for women to show their rationality. They stated that if women were given the same opportunities

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<sup>3</sup> See: <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/mevzuat/anayasa/anayasa-ing.htm> , Emphasis added by the author, P.K.



and education as men, they would prove the inconsistency and imperfection of the common judgments of men about women. According to them, it was the public sphere where women would prove their rationality.

We do not deny the revolutionary character of bourgeois feminism in the beginning. They had their place in feminist history and they tried to cope with socially conservative philosophers and the widespread consensus that the principles of rational individualism were not appropriate for women. However, they were unconscious of the fact that their demands pertaining to equal educational opportunities and working conditions were not meant for the lower class women and men. For instance, they were a long way off understanding the conditions and motives of a middle age mother without any career or education; and they did not intend to hold any hope for her, either.

In this context, their perception of “women’s problems” has been a shallow one and composed of a declaration of the demands for their own class. While they considered women’s problems as a matter of individual preferences and will, they were not able to perceive the fact that what they called ‘our self preferences and freedoms’ have actually been the outcome of social class privilege. They never directly criticized the entrenched sexual division of labor, the existing system, nor its institutions, some of which have had their influences on sexual roles for centuries, namely religion, the state and monogamous marriage.

Bourgeois feminism searches for a solution within the capitalist system; it argues that once political and legal equality have been achieved, it is up to individual women to take advantage of the circumstances and opportunities provided by this equality. This point of view of liberal feminism is highly class blind, and it promises a place to the woman in the labor force within the limits of gender roles. Therefore it serves to reproduce of the entrenched sexual division of labor.

Without negating the importance of education, emphasizing the structural aspects of women’s position in the market in addition to the low education level, the conventional sexual division of labor, the poor employment creation, and high unemployment, is vital to making public opinion perceive women’s secondary position as a *socio-economic* problem rather than just an

economic one. In this way the problems of women will lose its characterization as the result of individual failure and ignorance. This constitutes one of the motives behind the thesis you are reading now. People will then see the issue of women's inferior position as socially determined. We argue that gender inequality has been and is related to other structural inequalities embodied in society; and as long as the structure of society is not reorganized, we are not likely to realize a revolutionary change in the sexual division of labor.

The author does not believe in any kind of equality within a class based society. Thus, the author of the thesis believes that participation in the waged-labor can not be seen as a sufficient condition of enjoying gender equality for women, and she sees that gender equality – not in the sense of the equality of opportunities or equality before law but thoroughgoing gender equality – can not be provided unless capitalist production relations and the traditional roles relating to family and society are eliminated. In this context, this thesis does not serve the aim of showing how women can participate better in wage labor. Rather it claims to examine the paradoxes embodied in the mainstream statements concerning women's problems, and to show the steps to be taken if the official agenda is really sincere about its intentions of ensuring a more successful and satisfying work environment for women as well as equality through all social domains.

Satisfactory gender equality crucially depends on the elimination of gender segregation of any kind of social traditional roles both in the public sphere and private sphere, no matter whether it is paid or unpaid. In the mainstream economic literature, however, the empowerment of women has been discussed within the limits of the labor market system. In the mainstream development literature, the basic criteria of gender equality has been the high rates of female participation in 'productive' sectors in the public sphere, and the presence of the provisions that helps women to participate easily in the public sphere without rejecting their traditional role of being a mother and wife. Whether or not the roles of women in the labor market acquire a different character from their roles of the gendered division of labor are of the interest of the mainstream economic agenda. On the other hand, successive Turkish governments have been unsuccessful even in reaching the goals concerning

gender equality within the assumptions of the mainstream policies that Turkey has been implementing.

In the Turkish development plans, the problem of low level of female participation in the labor market has mainly been taken in hand with an affected style in terms of poverty alleviation, the generalization of flexibility within the employment, the encouragement of female entrepreneurship, and educating women rather than referring to any target directly related to the employment problem itself, or setting a time limitation, or defining the next steps to be followed (Toksöz, 2007: 54-79). On the other hand, given the problem of employment creation, high unemployment --especially among the young and educated population-- and the high costs of education shakes the faith of society at large in education as a way of having a better and decent life.<sup>4</sup>

As a woman with a university degree, the author of the thesis does not approve of the emphasis being laid on the importance of education to be centered mainly on economic externalities within the labor market system. She has come to know by experience the fact that being educated is not enough to provide security for women to be better off in either the public or private sphere. The author does not believe in the common sisterhood argument of the radical feminism in which women share the ‘same’ experiences and problems, rather she argues for the existence of dilemmas of the double life and difficulties of which the various aspects and intensities are experienced by women due to class, race, age, and regional distinctions between one another. The thesis that you are about to read is the outcome of the author’s observations. The reason to choose Turkey as the country to be examined is that the author has not been in any other country long enough to internalize the socio-economic circumstances and her observations. The potential contribution of the thesis is that there is no study that handles the women’s position in Turkey in this context.

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<sup>4</sup> Tansel (2002b) argues for the domination of the discouraged-worker effect on the added-worker effect for the female labor force participation and its negative reflections on the female unemployment in Turkey. For more detailed information, see: Tansel, A., *Economic Development and Female Labor Force Participation in Turkey: Time-Series Evidence and Cross-Province Estimates*, Middle East Technical University, Economic Research Center (ERC) Working Papers in Economics, 01/05, 2002b, pp. 1-37.

To this end, the contribution of education to women's status in the labor market will be investigated. In this chapter, first we will talk about the etymology of the concept of development and underdevelopment, the motives behind the idea of development and its interpenetration with modernization theory which assumes development as a linear process that underdeveloped countries must follow to achieve advance, and how women have been placed in the development literature. Then we will present the Women in Development (WID) School literature, as a critical understanding which is motivated by concern for the problems of "third world" women regarding development processes, and then we will talk about the shortcomings and limitations of the WID School's approach. Lastly, we will argue that The WID's and international agencies' emphasis on educating women as the main concern, although important, provides an incomplete and individualistic solution to social problems of gender subordination while leaving the problems based on social paradigm untouched.

## **1.2. Historical Background**

### **1.2.1. Literature Review (1945- 1970)**

The concept of development was implicit in Adam Smith's work. Adam Smith did not use the term "development" but he used the accumulation of capital as the indicator of advancement and enrichment of England. In the nineteenth century Marx presented an evolutionary concept of development (Wood, 1993). The concept of development began to be made explicit in the 1930s, under the influence of the great depression. At this point Marxist explanations of development were included in economical understanding by theorists like Schumpeter and Tawney. While Schumpeter reduced Marxist concepts to the evolution of capitalism, Tawney used Marxist concepts to understand the development of non-Western societies as supposedly evolving in the path of West (Arndt, 1981: 458).

Although the idea of development had emerged before World War II, it became significant after the war in the context of the trend towards decolonization of the periphery and the Cold War. This was the period of US hegemony. The USA came out victorious from the war in every aspect. In exchange for acting as a global policeman the USA demanded a “price”, which was a “new international economic order” through Bretton Woods institutions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) under US hegemony (Hoogvelt, 2001: 33). The international control of the USA was reinforced by economic means through the mentioned financial institutions of the USA. While US control of these institutions was guaranteed through creation of a ‘tradition’ that one of the major officers would always be an American.

Meanwhile the foreign policy of the Western Powers caused the Cold War. The development programme put forward by the US would enable it to keep the various post war liberation movements under control. The United States had an obvious benefit in “dismantling the colonial empires” to gain access to raw materials and “Third World” markets (Rist, 1997: 75). The liberation struggles of the underdeveloped countries would help to make the new imperialist system replace the old one. The United States perceived the colonial trade blocs as an obstacle to its own economic expansion. On the other hand the European nations were unable to sustain the pre-war imperialist system that cost much more to sustain after the war (Young, 2001). The reconstitution of the international relations of production was historically necessary. These pressures resulted in a new imperialist system. Securing a stable investment climate and, having and keeping markets open to world trade were essential to the nature of this informal imperialism<sup>5</sup>.

However it was difficult to count this new system as “new”. The so-called new system amounted to an indirect form of the pre-war imperialist system. Although colonialism was said to come to an end, imperialism was still in action. The post war period was “post to colonialism but not post to imperialism” (Young, 2001: 44). As Nkrumah pointed out in his book called

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<sup>5</sup> For a background about the structure of reproduction of capitalism, see Wallerstein, I., *The Capitalist World Economy*, Cambridge University Press, 1979.

*Neocolonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (1965), neocolonialism can be seen as the American way of colonialism, as the stage of imperialism without colonialism. Neocolonialism is as good as a subtle continuation of traditional colonialism.

In 1949, Truman gave his second inaugural address, what is popularly known as his Point Four speech. It has been accepted as the speech which inaugurated 'the development age' (Rist, 1997: 71). The Bretton Woods institutions, together with the Truman Doctrine, set up the rules for the system of 'informal' imperialism (Hoogvelt, 2001). Truman's Point Four speech represented this new era in these words: "All countries including our own will greatly benefit from a constant program for the better use of the world's human and natural sources" (Rist, 1997: 71). It underscored that the aiding policy of the programme was just 'To help others help themselves', and it was well intentioned: "Experience shows that our commerce with other countries expands as they progress industrially and economically. Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace" (Rist, 1997: 71).

However, the aiding policy of the USA was not proposed as a mark of good will. It occurred against the backdrop of the Cold War in order to keep the Third World out of the influence of the communist regimes and against the liberation of underdeveloped countries from the neocolonial order that worked to the advantage of the USA. Economic and technological aid was firstly thought of a means of achieving these goals. However, it was seen later on that economic and technological transplantation to the Third World would yield the desirable outcomes only to the extent that it was complemented by wider and congruent policy changes in the social and political fields. This speech included a missionary statement which introduced the development of these underdeveloped countries as if it were a holy mission of civilization.

The adjective 'underdeveloped' appears in the speech as the fourth point. This was the 'first time' it had been used in a text intended for such world-wide audience as a synonym for economic backwardness (Rist, 1997: 72). On the other hand, in this speech, 'underdevelopment' appears to exist without any historical grounding, as a state of poverty in nature, that is to say a naturally occurring condition restricting the newly independent countries ability to

develop economically and socially. By defining underdevelopment, as a lack of civilizational development rather than as the outcome of historical circumstances, development policy presented economic growth and funding through foreign aid the only possible way out.

This terminological innovation also changed the conception of development itself. Now it took on a transitive meaning on; contrary to the colonizer/colonized opposition, the developed/underdeveloped dichotomy presented a different relationship. Underdevelopment was not simply the antonym of development anymore; it was --so to speak-- its “embryonic form” (Rist, 1997: 74). Therefore an acceleration of economic growth was the only logical way of catching-up according to the ‘first world’ perception. As Wallerstein pointed out:

Until 1945 it still seemed reasonable to assume that Europe was the center of the world... But the world moved inexorably on...To cope with this changing world, western scholars invented development, invented Third World, invented modernization (Wallerstein, 1979: 132).

Many scholars of the time emphasized that it was critically important to apply the ‘big push’ (Rosenstein-Rodan, 1943) and to identify ‘poles of development’ (Perroux, 1950) or to turn the process of ‘cumulative causation’ (Myrdal, 1957) into a virtuous cycle of positive feedback. All this was intended to get “Third World” countries out of the ‘low equilibrium trap’ and move them toward higher equilibrium to ‘take off’ (Rostow, 1960) and to carry out the ‘great spurt’ (Gershenkron, 1962) and ‘critical minimum effort’ (Lebeinstein, 1963).<sup>6</sup> These approaches presented a paradigm in which the rules of development were supposedly the same for all. These works of the mentioned theorists were as good as a “how to develop” manual for all ‘underdeveloped’ countries (Hoogvelt, 2001: 35).

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<sup>6</sup> in Mkandawire, Thandika, *The Need to Rethink Development Economics*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), Geneva, 2001, p. 4.

Modernization theory was of use in masking the continuing imperialist nature of unequal relationships between the core and the periphery. The following theorization of development by various authors was related to this baseline. Hoselitz (1952), one of the institutors of modernization theory, thought that to counteract the influence of Communist Soviet Union on the newly independent decolonized countries, institutions and rules ordering the social relations had to be reordered in accordance with the Western model. Hoselitz defined 'development' as an evolutionary process. The depiction of Arthur Lewis (1954) for development was also a declaration which aimed at a rapid catch-up for underdeveloped countries with the West.

One can meet a 'caricaturized' version of Hoselitz's approach in Rostow's famous book called *The Stages of Economic Growth: a Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960) (Trak, 1984: 59). In his book, Rostow introduced five stages of development. To achieve advance, societies should go through these stages step-by-step to attain the age of high mass-consumption stage. He based his argument around the perceived historical evolution of Western industrialized societies, especially Britain and the US.

Women did not figure widely in these early developmentalist scholars' studies. Many works and debates on development have focused on macro-level issues such as indicating how development can and should be measured, what benefits development provides etc. References to the influence of development policies on a micro level have rarely gotten detailed. This especially was true in terms of what development provided for women. Women were often subsumed under the big picture of poverty; thus the issues surrounding women were neglected at the official level.

One of few authors of the time who pronounced on women was Arthur Lewis. In his work named *Economic Development with Unlimited Supplies of Labour* (1954) Lewis presented a two-sector model representing the capitalist and noncapitalist. The latter sector involved a reservoir of underemployed labour that could be mobilized into the capitalist sector in order to ensure its expansion. This theory of Lewis is reminiscent of the concept of *reserve army of labour* first used by Marx in order to explain the dynamics of the capitalist labor market. According to Marx, capitalism has required the existence of such a group of



workers who are marginal to the economy in order to use them in times of recession or expanding production. It is also reminiscent of Luxemburg's words: "The capitalist mode of production becomes impossible in all points without non capitalist surroundings" (Luxemburg, 2003: 345).

Lewis mentioned that an unlimited supply of labour exists in countries where population is comparatively large relative to resources, and where marginal productivity of labour is close to zero in the subsistence sector. The more important issue to him was that the price of this labour in the capitalist sector was at the subsistence level (Lewis, 1954: 141). Efficiency improves, when the cost of inputs (the cost of labour to investor; wages) employed is reduced relative the value of output (new industries; capital accumulation).

He attributed vital importance to this unlimited supply of labour in the process of creation of new industries at the lowest cost. He asked "from what sectors would additional labour be available if new industries were created offering employment at subsistence wages" and replied himself "*First of all, there are the wives and daughters of the household*<sup>7</sup>... One of the surest ways of increasing the national income is therefore to create new sources of employment for women outside the home" (Lewis, 1954: 142-3). In this perception, women's labour force was seen as a subsidy to the process of capital accumulation.

At the same time Lewis represented development as the main chance for women to achieve equal opportunities and to use and show their rationality; thereby to reach the level of humanity:

Women benefit from [economics growth] even more than men...Woman gains freedom from drudgery, is emancipated from the seclusion of the household, and gains at last *the chance to be a full human being*, exercising her mind and her talents in the same way as men. It is open to men to debate whether economic progress is good for men or not, but for women to debate the desirability of economic growth is to debate whether women should have the chance to

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<sup>7</sup> Emphasis added by the author, P.K.

cease to be beasts of burden, and *to join the human race* (Lewis, 1955: 422).<sup>8</sup>

The condition of female labour fitted in well with the requirements of capital calling for a low cost labour supply. The developed economies shifted progressively the labor-intensive processes of production to the Third World. This kind of employment represented highly temporary and insecure working conditions, due to the high rate at which employees are replaced.

Lewis considered the subsistence sector in which women had been employed to be ‘unproductive’; because “output per head is lower than in the capitalist sector, because it is not fructified by capital” (Lewis, 1954: 146). Thereby, “The transfer of women’s work from the household to commercial employment is one of the most notable features of economic development” (Lewis, 1954: 143). In this perception, women’s employment referred to an upper stage of economic development. He also pointed out that “The central fact of economic development is rapid capital accumulation” (Lewis, 1954: 155-157). This model of Lewis is a representative of the understanding of development agencies about ‘women and development.’

Until the 1970s, whether or not women were benefiting from the development process was ignored in the development paradigm. While the forms of production techniques intended for market economies had become widespread, the contributions of women’s labor force have been undervalued and the means of production such as techniques, credits, qualification and money required for the effective application of these new production forms have been held by men. After all, women found themselves as lower-waged, uninsured and unqualified.

Change began to be felt in the area of women and modernization with the publication of Ester Boserup’s book, *Women’s Role in Economic Development* (1970). Prior to this work, “...the specific role of women [in development] had been largely ignored, particularly the question of how development affects women’s subordinate position in most societies” (Beneria and Sen, 1981: 279).

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<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Kabeer, Naila, *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*, Verso, London, 1994, p.19. Emphasis added by the author, P.K.

The importance of Boserup's book was that she presented the negative effects of colonialism and the influence of capitalism on subsistence economies where women's involvement was crucial to the achievement of sustainable development. For instance, she noted that women lost their access to land in Africa after land reforms were introduced by European administrators (Boserup, 1970: 54-60). According to Boserup, these land reforms were based on western notions about what constituted 'appropriate' female tasks and on the colonialists' gender-based prejudice that "cultivation was properly men's work" (Boserup, 1970: 54).<sup>9</sup>

Boserup explained the reasons behind women's exclusion from the modernization process, as being the prejudices of both the development agencies' and women, and women's lack of productivity due to their nonqualification: "Women's way to employment in the modern sector is barred not only by women's prejudices, but also by their lack of proper qualifications" (Boserup, 1970: 212).

She introduced the individual preferences of women as the major determinant of labour market segmentation while analyzing the supply side in the labour market: "Women workers prefer the existing system of confining women to special jobs reserved for them in industries and offices" (Boserup, 1970: 216). As for the demand side, she attributed unequal opportunities and gender stratification of the market to the preferences of employers. By doing so, she did not take into account the factors influencing the process of wage determination and the dynamic structure of the labour market, except the preferences. Besides preference is not an external variable which can be taken as given, independent from the effects of other variables. Preferences are formed under the influence of both external and internal dynamic factors changing in time. Therefore preferences can not be seen as a satisfactory explanation in themselves. The wage determination process is not just related to the productivity of labour power; it is also closely related to the cost of reproduction of labour force (Beneria and Sen, 1981).

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<sup>9</sup> For the similar opinions of other WID scholars in this issue, see (Rogers, 1980: 39; Tinker, 1976: 22).

Boserup emphasized education as the main factor through which “modernization would begin to work to women's advantage” (Beneria and Sen, 1981: 297-8). According to her, with increased productivity, women’s chances for a better paid and regular job would be increased in urban areas while their chances to learn advanced agricultural techniques would also be improved in the rural ones. One can find this solution impermanent and limited, because it highlights the changes in the characteristics of individual women’s productivity rather than of the capital accumulation process as a whole. It is inadequate to explain the high unemployment rates among graduates in the Third World (Beneria and Sen, 1981: 298).

Boserup mentioned one more requirement in order to guarantee women’s productive employment; which was “a certain attitude to work which may best be described as the capacity to work regularly and attentively” (Boserup, 1970: 214). She highlighted the importance of modern domestic equipment, processed food and smaller family size available thanks to technology, in order to encourage women that look forward to caring for their children “with a fraction of the hours of work previously needed” (Boserup, 1970: 225). As women spend more time in the labour market, changing circumstances may result in pressures to develop for substitution of new technology in the home with women power, for instance, dishwashers, take-away meals, prepared products, housecleaning and other services; all these technological innovations tend to diminish the time spent at home, women may be out of home but more important issue to handle is where women have gone then; to which sectors, under what conditions they are being employed.

Although Boserup presented an interesting set of empirical data, she fails to account for the conceptual facts behind the data with the assistance of a satisfying theoretical base. Her unquestioned belief in modernization and neoclassic economics made her unable to complement her empirical findings within a rewarding and coherent framework. She kept her study within the framework of neoclassical economics and avoided questioning its basic structural understandings.

Boserup saw a correlation between modernization and women’s loss of economic independence on the basis of her empirical evidence. However, she

was not opposed to the idea of modernization theory; on the contrary; she believed that modernization was inevitable, progressive, and also advantageous. The biases of modernization theory are evident in her presumption that the introduction of commercial agriculture was generally beneficial, except for the consequent decline in women's status (Beneria and Sen, 1981: 287). What she did point out was that women benefited relatively less than men from modernization and she attempted to understand the reasons for that. She criticized modernization theory with respect to the failure of policy implementations to have women benefit from the modernization process. She had nothing to do with the theoretical criticism; her appeals were due to the policy implications in practice. According to her, women's marginalization was due to cultural and individual prejudices rather than the modernization theory itself.

The fact is that the capital accumulation process, which has been gaining momentum with the modernization efforts, has separated women from the means of production and has led to more insecure and dependent labour conditions. Modernization process meets the needs of capital accumulation and profit making firms, and it is not an egalitarian process. The main problem with modernization is not the lack of equal opportunities that may provide women a chance to 'prove' themselves, but a fundamental one that is intimately related to systematically generated and intensified gender stratification and its externalities to individual men, state policies and capitalist processes of production. It is for sure that capitalist development helps women set some social taboos up and also provide new job openings. But they also give rise to new forms of subordination; to be exact, within the labour market (Beneria and Sen, 1981: 90).

Boserup, too, considered economic growth to be the primary goal of development, as did the early development scholars, and in this context she concentrated only on the situation of women in the market system, outside the household. By doing so she ignored the importance of social and reproductive roles of women; thereby she missed the chance to give a comprehensive understanding of this subordination. The hypothesis that the economic development will improve the position of the woman is grounded on the belief

that one's social status changes with the contribution of him/her to the production process. Her study also lacked any feminist point of view that enables her to handle women's subordination problem in all its aspects.

Up until the 1970s, problems of welfare and unemployment in the developed countries, and those of poverty and underdevelopment in the developing ones, were managed through Keynesian economic policies and developmental policies respectively (Mkandawire, 2001)<sup>10</sup>. This first neocolonial period experienced the Fordist model of production and Keynesian demand management. The postwar boom was closely related to the ravages of the war, which had provided a favourable set of circumstances for restructuring industrial sectors. A continuous and uninterrupted expansion of market production was of great importance for this period of reconstitution. It sounds logical that the very first reaction by the capitalists in the core countries to the crisis was to transport Fordist model of production to those areas of the periphery where wage rates were relatively low, in order to reduce the cost of capital and compensate for the losses of profitability.

### **1.2.2. Literature Review (1970s and so on)**

Neocolonialism was the outcome of the very success of colonialism as a hegemonic organization of international production relations which supplied "vast accumulation" of capital to the nations of Western Europe (Hoogvelt, 2001: 29)<sup>11</sup>. Throughout the first neocolonial period, from 1950 to 1970, the direct exploitation of raw material resources by multinational capitalist enterprises had still been the major method to keep the imperialist profit. A geographical expansion of the capitalist mode of production on a world scale had been the characteristic of imperialism both in the colonial and the

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<sup>10</sup> For an interesting work concerning this era, see: Toye, J.F.J, *Development Policy in the Shadows of Keynes*, in *Dilemmas of Development: Reflections on the Counter-Revolution in Development Theory and Policy*, Toye, J.F.J (ed.), Basil Blackwell; Oxford, 1987, pp. 22-46.

<sup>11</sup> There are also scholars supporting the idea that colonialism had led to negative consequences for the colonizer, especially in the case of the British colonialism during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. To instance, see: Begam, R. and Moses Michael V. (eds.), *Modernism and Colonialism: British and Irish Literature, 1899-1939*, Duke University Press, 2007.

neocolonial period. Geographical expansion had provided instruments to capitalism to succeed in dealing with the matters of narrowing production relations by intruding into and influencing virgin peripheral areas. What distinguished the crisis of the 1970s from other cyclical recessions was that “there were simply no more fresh pre-capitalist areas available for further geographical expansion” (Hoogvelt, 2001: 47). In this case capitalism had to deal with the crisis without recourse to incorporation of new areas. This feature of the crisis of the 1970s distinguished it from any other cyclical recession of overproduction and underconsumption. An essential global restructuring was inevitable in order to restore market confidence and to maintain the drive to expand markets.

At the same time, the neoliberal counterrevolution and increasing influence of monetarism in the industrialized capitalist countries led to doubts about the promised success of development economics. In the mid-1970s, development economics in both academia and policy circles fell into disfavor. The titles of some of the articles published in the 1970s and 1980s made the loss of status of the development discipline visible: ‘The Birth, Life and Death of Development Economics’ (Seers, 1979), ‘The Rise and Decline of Development Economics’ (Hirschmann, 1981), ‘The Poverty of Development Economics’ (Lal, 1983).<sup>12</sup>

In fact while ‘development’ fell into dispute, the core did not lose its interest in the resources offered by the ‘Third World’. It was disclosed by the crisis that development programmes imposed on the Third World would not work out satisfactorily unless these programmes were replaced by expedient changes of social, cultural and political policies (Hoogvelt, 2001). The policy approach changed from one of development aid to one of Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs), which involved a series of conditions that the IMF forced Third World governments to adopt in return for loans. These generally involved deep cuts in subsidies to poor people such as food, health care or educational subsidies (Pelizzon and Casparis, 1995). This plus the influence of Boserup’s book and Liberal feminism in the West gave rise to a series of writers perhaps

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<sup>12</sup> in Mkandawire, Thandika, *The Need to Rethink Development Economics*, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), Geneva, 2001, p. 3.

best exemplified by Irene Tinker and Michelle Bo Bramsen (1976) and Barbara Rogers (1980). This constituted the *Women in Development* (WID) School.

The efficiency argument was dominant in the expressions of WID advocacy; but the one who gave explicit voice to it was Barbara Rogers. Until Rogers (1980), WID scholars mentioned mainly the aggravating effects of development on women. Rogers handled the issue in a different way; she stressed the benefits to development from women's inclusion in it rather than women's benefits from development policies. It was a discussion of who needs whom more. She emphasized that "continued neglect of women's productivity was a costly mistake that planners could no longer afford to make."<sup>13</sup> The conduct of the discussion veered through a cost-benefit analysis at this point. The USAID, United States Agency for International Development, made this new departure clear on the official level, by declaring that "The experience of the past 10 years tells us that the key issue underlying the women in development concept is an economic one."<sup>14</sup>

WID arguments in accordance with the efficiency approach have stressed the benefits to society from women's participation in the market and tried to show that 'the costs of investing in women's productivity are justifiable in terms of the economic returns' (Razavi and Miller, 1995: 5). For instance, female education was underscored by many WID scholars as cost-effective means of dealing with the population problem (Rogers, 1980: 107). In accordance with the circumstances of neoliberal period, WID has tried to provide an economic rationale to make the investments in women logical. However, these endeavours to justify the investments in women sound very pragmatic and contradict feminist movements. Presenting the dividends from investing in women's productive activities means that "WID advocates shifted the emphasis away from women's needs and interests in development, to calculating what development needs from women" (Goetz, 1994: 30). This means that productive efficiency is what deserved reward. But this is like a gun that can be easily leveled at women themselves: "If it can be empirically shown that

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<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Kabeer, N., *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*, Verso, London, 1994, p.25.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in *ibid*, p.26.



women's productivity is consistently lower than men's, then it follows that they deserve fewer resources" (Jaquette, 1990: 65).

On the other hand, the WID scholars, especially Rogers, gave rise to a discussion concerning the methods of measurement and the definition of women's work used by development experts, and mentioned that if better statistical data was attainable; then the chance to generate more straight, clear and prosperous policies would be improved. This suggestion was met with skepticism by some scholars, namely the researchers of Association for African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD) (Kabeer, 1994: 34). Rogers explained her concerns by these words:

The data base for planning is the statistics, surveys, censuses and cost-benefit analyses...One of the earliest efforts of the United Nations in the economic field...was a drive to create a vast improvement in national statistical services in Third World countries and to back this with a system of international statistical collection...National income data became available for a large number of countries and territories by the late 1950s...By 1970 few 'market economies' remained for which at least estimates were not available...despite the growing recognition that they (GNP data) reflect the wholesale exclusion of informal and non-cash output in Third World countries: the sectors in which women are particularly concentrated (Rogers, 1980: 59-60).

She emphasized that the underestimation of women's work was due to missing definitions and disembodied data related to women's work in GNP calculation. She mentioned that GNP data calculations did not show women's economic importance. However, she failed to show the reasons for that exclusion.

These excluded activities, which were mainly subsistence production, unpaid domestic services and informal sector activities were seen as unproductive by the official development agencies. This was the main reason for

not taking them into account. It was not just the stereotypes and misperceptions of individual development scholars. Productivity was a basic determinant in the arguments of mainstream economics. This was about the vision of the international development agencies. GNP has been used as the major indicator of the economic growth in a country in the framework of development and it represents the total monetary value of the goods and services produced over a specific time period. Labour productivity is defined as ‘GNP per hour worked’ or ‘per person employed’; the amount of output relative to the inputs used in the production process. In Adam Smith’s words:

There is one sort of labour which adds to the value of the subject upon which it is bestowed: there is another which has no such effect. The former, as it produces a value may be called productive; the latter unproductive labour (Smith, 1904, Vol. 2, Chp. 3: 1).

To be counted as productive, there must be a surplus value in this context. One can realize that the modern definition of productivity is nothing but a revised form of Adam Smith’s definition. The WID advocacy wanted women not only to be integrated in the market, but also more productively integrated. This was done by shifting them from what they see as less productive sectors to more productive sectors. This is what is recommended. Education is thought to be the key instrument for this shift to occur.

So what makes them different from other development scholars they criticized? They did not search for the recognition of housework or informal market; but for women’s integration into the appropriate sectors that are not excluded from the GNP calculation. So, the radical revisions about the redefinition of productivity have still remained untouched. After all, the concern of mainstream development planners about accurate data has emerged from the business rule of ‘if you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it.’ Moreover, the data does not mean everything and ironically Boserup is a good example for that.

The WID advocacy, as a whole, did not challenge the fundamental essence of the development supported by international agencies and national state representatives. What was required was an extensive search on the framework of development policies, the theories behind these policies and conflicting interests concerning class, race and gender aspects, and structural inequalities essential to the process of capital accumulation.

WID saw the inequality between men and women in the distribution of benefits from development process as the basic problem. However, the problem was a more fundamental one – namely the inherent inequality in the structure of the capitalist system. Women and men had always been involved in the development process; they both experienced discrimination due to class and race. While the effects of institutions of capitalist state and developmental agencies have been felt in the market system, the effects of individual power relations have been experienced within the private sphere by women. Moreover, WID represented the problem as if the marginalization from the market is unique to Third World Women. Therefore they actually accept the inequalities in capitalism. Sen and Grown (1985) rejected this kind of representation and pointed out that there have always been people who are marginalized in the processes of the market economy and that these have been ignored by liberal Western feminism.

Also the WID approach saw western women as the norm and the others as an optional extra. This is a fictitious self presentation of the First World rather than being a material everyday reality. The Third World Woman image of that the veiled, victim, passive, virgin, sacrificial one, is based on the myth of secular, liberated Western women having control over their own lives as the ultimate aim to reach (Mohanty, 1984). The term, “Third World Woman”, wrongly assumes as if there exists an artificial sisterhood in which non western women share the ‘same’ experiences and problems by overlooking the contexts of class, race and culture; just like the term, Third World, itself.

WID arguments fit in well with the mainstream agenda. The *equality* and *productivity* arguments of the WID advocacy took its origins from the rationality assumption of the liberal thought. In liberal understanding, the universal equality argument takes its origins from the ground that all human beings are

possessed of reason and the ability to consider the best for themselves. Therefore, if all human beings are provided equal opportunities, then they will make the best expedient choices for their purpose. WID scholars believed that education, as an opportunity to show the rationality of women, was the key element of getting equality with men. The WID approach has nothing more to say. These kinds of arguments belong to liberal feminism. They have been argued for a long time by liberal feminists. The major contribution of the WID was actually “to extend further the logic of liberal feminist argument to include explicitly women all over the world” (Kabeer, 1994: 27).

The mainstream development agencies have always degraded the problem of women to a ‘simple’ personal problem that can be solved by educating the ones who are defined as unconscious, ignorant, susceptible to ideologies or marginal. Moreover, educating women is counted as important for neoliberal economists not for the reason that the half of the world population suffer from the bad living conditions but for the reason that ignorant mothers are considered likely to bring up lazy and unproductive individuals. In the report published by World Bank in 1994 named “Investing in all the people: Educating women in developing countries”, the economical approach’s logic shows itself;

Once its benefits are recognized, investment in girls’ education may well be the highest return investment available in the developing world...First, educating women reduces child mortality...Educated women have healthier children...educating women helps prevent the spread of AIDS...educating women has important environmental benefits...(Summers, 1994: 1, 8, 10, 12, 13).

In this construction, women are no different from a lifeless raw material to invest in. When education has been presented as the only way out for ending the inequalities faced by women, one must ask some questions about whether education comes up with the mentioned conclusions. The main question is ‘Why should we assume that educating women is the answer to their social, economic or legal problems?’

Advanced economic growth is said to lead up to the greater educational opportunities which supply the potential opportunities in employment and seem to result in smaller sized families (Roy et. al., 1999). The idea behind this solution proposal was based on the familiar belief that advanced economic growth leads up to the greater educational opportunities which supply the potential opportunities in employment and seem to result in smaller sized families. As economic growth and development are being advanced, new opportunities in employment for women are expected to open up. While higher GNP per capita is associated with extensive and better provision of education services, higher education level amounts to greater chance for having a more secured, regular and relatively high paid job. However, this optimism of the human capital scholars remained on paper. The increased employment of females in the labour force outside the household, especially in peripheral countries, seems to be insignificant for providing a permanent and adequate assistance with regard to the improvement in the status of women. A substantial portion of female labour power seems to continue to be employed in the low paid and insecure sectors (Ward, 1988).

Besides high unemployment has weakened individuals' belief on the education and its yields mentioned by both scholars and international agencies. Both men and women are discouraged by the bad conditions in the labour market, the growing costs of living and schooling, and desperation in the face of harsh working and living conditions.

The economic motive behind the emphasis on education is related to the belief that human capital as a function of education and experience, is also a factor of production, which is expected to improve gross national product, per capita income, fertility rates etc. seen as the indicators of success or failure of the development policies by contributing to the industrialization process<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> For instance, see: Keeley, Brian, *Human Capital: How What You Know Shapes Your Life*, OECD, Paris, 2007. For population control concerns, see: pp. 44-46, for economic growth concerns, see: pp. 3, 29.

The concept of human capital has been controversial since its emergence.<sup>16</sup> However, human capital is not a new concept. One can meet the essence of human capital theory in various chapters of Adam Smith's famous book named *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. He considered individual capabilities of workers important as a kind of capital. He almost summarized the literature of human capital in one passage:

Fourthly [the fixed capital consists] of the acquired and useful abilities of all the inhabitants or members of the society. The acquisition of such talents, by the maintenance of the acquirer during his education, study, or apprenticeship, always costs a real expense, which is a capital fixed and realized, as it were, in his person. Those talents, as they make a part of his fortune, so do they likewise of that of the society to which he belongs. The improved dexterity of a workman may be considered in the same light as a machine or instrument of trade which facilitates and abridges labour, and which, though it costs a certain expense, repays that expense with a profit. (Smith, 1904, Vol. 2, Chp.1: 17).

Having this pioneering idea, it was not until the 1960s when economists started to embody these kinds of ideas in their works. Human capital has been given a central importance in explanations of wage differences between workers as well as in analyses of growth and development of nations<sup>17</sup>. Both macro and microeconomists have endeavored to determine the role of human capital in the improvement and structure of economic growth. Each has its own theoretical approach, simplifying assumptions, data sets, and judgments by inference in

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<sup>16</sup> For a good theoretical discussion on human capital theory and its perception to labour, see: Bowles, Samuel and Gintis, Herbert, *The Problem with Human Capital Theory: A Marxian Critique*, *The American Economic Review*, Vol. 65, No. 2, 1975, pp. 74-82.

<sup>17</sup> For some studies where human capital models employed in order to explain wage differences in labour market, see: Kasnakoğlu and Dayioğlu (1997), Tzannatos (1999), Dayioğlu (2000), Selim and İlkkaracan (2002). For some studies referring to the relation between human capital and economic growth, see: Arrow (1962), Uzawa (1965), Romer (1986), Lucas (1988), Grossmann and Helpman (1991), Aulin (1997), Arestis (2007).

order to clarify how education and similar services affect total factor productivity.

Economic success has usually been associated with improved human capital<sup>18</sup>. Likewise, there has been the discussion of causality on whether an expansion in education creates wealthier societies or wealthier societies expand education. “Does education spur growth or does growth spur individuals to consume more education? In practice, it is likely that causality operates in both directions” (OECD, 2005).<sup>19</sup> An important point emphasized in this literature of relation between economic growth and education<sup>20</sup> is that countries with better education services tend to become wealthier, thereby more economic resources are available to spend on further expanding education services. This sounds a chicken-and-egg situation. Becker, the writer of *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis with Special Reference to Education* (1965), highlighted this mutual relationship by saying that “I definitely believe there’s strong causation from improvements in education- in human capital- to economic growth. But there is also some reverse back from economic growth to increases in education” (Becker, 2007).<sup>21</sup>

Arrow asserted that job and wage discrimination against women will not continue to exist under perfect competition (Arrow, 1972). He believed that perfect competition in the market would ensure that women do not suffer from economic discrimination in employment and they are paid fairly the value of their marginal product. In accordance with this descriptive market system, if

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<sup>18</sup> For instance, see: Keeley, *op. cit.*, p.3.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Keeley, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>20</sup> For an extensive source about the literature and the transformation of educational systems through neoliberal policies since 1980s, see: Ross, Wayne E., and Gibson, R., *Neoliberalism and Education Reform*, Hampton Press, New Jersey, 2007. For the role of the international organizations on educational policies and the marketization of the education, see also: Martens, K., Rusconi, A. and Leuze, K. (eds.), *New Arenas of Education Governance: The Impact of International Organizations and Markets on Educational Policy Making*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted in Keeley, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

Becker is a fanatic supporter of human capital to the extent that he could claim ahistorically that “The problems [of Africa] are the lack of investment in human capital and the bad governmental policies that have been followed in Africa” (Becker, 2002: 5). For the full text of this article, see: <http://www.um.edu.uy/docs/revistafcee/2002/humancapitalBecker.pdf>

women are offered less than the value of their marginal product, the demand of profit maximizing employers for this relatively cheap labour force will increase and thereby the market wage rate will automatically be forced up and market equilibrium will be secured. He considered imperfect competition as the major basis of discrimination against women in the market. In this manner, the proposed solution for ending discrimination is to strengthen market competition and extend markets widely.<sup>22</sup> This depiction may sound logical on its own. However, it is hard to say that the assumption of perfect competition is grounded on facts while ‘segmented’ labour markets<sup>23</sup> all over the world appear to be an irrefutable reality.

Mincer and Polachek (1973) dealt with human capital theory on a microeconomic approach. According to them, for women to be paid on average with men is entirely an economically consistent rationale. They argue the case that women leave the workforce after having children and remain out of the market while stating childrearing as the reason. They focused mainly on the effects of interrupted work experience on wage growth and explained the reason for wage differences between women and men by “discontinuous labour force attachment” of women. They considered that interrupted work experience for any significant length of time leads to a deterioration of job skills; thereby

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<sup>22</sup> This argument was applied to the foreign policies of the core countries by some of neoclassical economists in order to smooth trade with the Third World and force them to improve market competition.

<sup>23</sup> Gender segregation is a difficult category to measure. The Duncan and Duncan index is the most-widely accepted measure for exploring differences in employment between any two sets of employees. It is commonly applied to gender segregation in the market and shows the differences between female and male workers with regard to their participation rates within occupational or sectoral categories. Selim and İlkkaracan (2002) employed the Duncan and Duncan segregation index both for occupational and industrial categories for the Turkish labour market. They found an occupational segregation index of 27.6 which means that nearly 30 % of female and male workers should be exchanged with one another across occupational categories so as to provide a perfect and balanced distribution. Similarly they found an industrial segregation index of 33.95, which denotes that nearly one third of all female and male workers should be transplanted across industries in order to have an equal distribution. For further information, see: Selim, R., and İlkkaracan, I., *Gender Inequalities in the Labor Market in Turkey: Differentials in Wages, Industrial and Occupational Distribution of Men and Women*, The University of Utah, Department of Economics, 2002, pp. 1-19. For a worldwide survey using the Duncan Index for gender segregation and coming to the similar conclusions with the Turkish case, see Tzannatos, Zafiris, *Women and Labor Market Changes in the Global Economy: Growth Helps, Inequalities Hurt and Public Policy Matters*, World Development, The World Bank Vol. 27, No. 3, 1999, pp. 551–569.



human capital stock depreciates. They were also famous for their “human-capital earnings function” which is said to present “the relation between the sequence of capital accumulation and the resulting growth in earnings” (Mincer, 1973: 78). Here, they described wages as a function of an individual’s accumulated human capital stock while human capital is represented as a function of education and experience. Mincer and Polachek also claimed that the length of time for remaining out of the workforce for women is likely to decline as economic growth, so to say GNP per capita, improves. Smaller family size associated with higher GNP per capita seems to have been the key bases behind this optimistic argument.

The explanation of interrupted work experience as the main reason for wage differences may help to understand why women having similar education level with their counterparts receive relatively lower incomes on average compared to males after returning to the workforce. The point to be highlighted by Mincer and Polachek here, is that women tends to have lower returns to experience than males and the interrupted work experience is the main reason for their relatively low incomes on average. This theory seems to sound reasonable in its own logic, however, it only tells one side of the story. It is inadequate to explain the reasons for relatively low ‘starting’ salaries of women on average, even at the same education and experience level (Mancke, 1971).

To specify to what extent potential differences in conditions of employment are due to the course of the market economy and to discrimination is difficult. Hoffman has tried to make up for misconceptions with regard to the determination of wage discrimination in the market and pointed out that “Any wage gap not due to legitimate productivity-related variables such as education, experience and occupation is attributed to discrimination” (Hoffman, 1991: 1). Furthermore one should take into account the possibility of discrimination in non wage areas. Many economists have employed residual methodology to measure wage discrimination.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The Oaxaca decomposition is a prevalent method for exploring the relation between the wage differentials between men and women and its causes; such as human capital endowments, occupational and industrial segregation and institutional factors like labour union coverage and social security coverage. Dayıođlu (2000) used the Oaxaca decomposition method in order to explore the reasons for wage differences in the Turkish labour market. She found out that 36.2% of the gender wage gap between men and women is due to human capital endowment

Schultz (1994) primarily stressed personal and external returns to women's education on a macroeconomic approach. He gave importance to female education not only for its positive effects on the productivity of individuals, but also for its external benefits:

Schooling for women may be justified in terms of efficiency (high individual private market returns), social externalities (for example reduced child mortality and fertility), intergenerational redistribution (such as better health and education of children and a slower growth in population) and equity (an increase in the productive capability of poorer individuals relative to richer individuals) (Schultz, 1994: 49).

He, like many previous scholar, tried to provide a rationale associated with efficiency argument for policy makers to subsidize female education; which is unsurprising. He emphasized many times in his work that "Improving the productivity of women through human capital investments directly advances economic development and the growth of measured output" (Schultz, 1994: 25).

Thus far, the method of approach of the mainstream agenda to the 'Third World' women's problems is critically presented. In the following chapters, the author introduces some empirical data promoting her principal arguments. The author is aware of the limited ability of the pure empirical study and its limited favourableness to comprehend social matters. However, this thesis claims to be a critique. In this context, we make use of the statistics that has been given unexceptionable recognition and credit by the mainstream agenda.

Most data used in the following chapters are supplied from the statistics of Turkish Statistical Institute (TURKSTAT), particularly from the Household Labor Force Surveys (HLFS) and the Census of the Population. The statistics

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differences while discriminatory mechanisms of the labour market accounted for 63.8 % of the differential. This means that a female worker having the same education and experience level, working in the same occupation and sector with her male counterpart is paid a wage less than his, independently of her productivity. For more detailed information, see: Dayıođlu, M., *Labor Market Participation of Women in Turkey*, in *Gender and Identity Construction: Women of Central Asia: Caucasus and Turkey*, Acar, F., and Ayata, G. (eds.), The Netherlands: E.S. Brill, 2000, pp. 44-73.

from the Turkish Employment Organization (ISKUR), General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women (KSGM), particularly from Gender Disaggregated Statistics, and the Center for Selecting-Placement Students (OSYM) are also used. The tables and figures involve the latest data, which was available in the course of the thesis writing in the databases of the mentioned institutions.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> In the thesis writing process, TURKSTAT database of the Dynamic Search included the 2006 data as the latest annual data available, and of the Household Labor Force Survey included the October 2007 data as the latest available data set. A short while ago, TURKSTAT updated the mentioned databases, and released the annual data of 2007 for the Household Labor Force Survey, the monthly data for the year 2008 and the data for the January 2009. For the Dynamic Search data base, the 2006 data is still the latest version. The data of the October 2007 used in the tables and the newly released data for the October 2007 is compared to see possible changes due to the adjustment in the Household Labor Force Survey results. Since the adjustment in the Household Labor Survey Results was done according to the Address Based Population Registration System by TURKSTAT, some changes in the absolute values are observed. However, this situation does not lead to any change in the proportional distributions. Likewise, in order to see whether or not an update of the data is indispensable for our study, the steps that are followed to form the tables have been reviewed by using the newly released annual data for the year 2007, and no substantial change is observed. The observed proportional variations stay below 1%. Furthermore, since this thesis is dealing with a structural phenomenon, within such a short term, the variations have no effect on the concluding comments.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE TURKISH LABOR MARKET from a GENDER PERSPECTIVE

This part of the thesis aims to analyze the Turkish labour market from a gender perspective in the context of the prevalent social and economic conditions in present day Turkey. The phenomenon of female poverty is associated with the absence of women from production processes in analyses emphasizing the education as the main solution. However, poverty of women does not stem from absence in production; it originates from their presence in production with lower status. Discrimination against women in the labor market demonstrates itself in various forms, such as facing more difficulties in obtaining employment, aggregation in specific sectors and occupations, lower wages, limited opportunity for promotion, higher likelihood of being out of work. In order to encourage female employment, the programmes specific to women, which have been considered for mainly female entrepreneurship rather than full time and regular jobs, in accordance with the “flexibility” argument of the World Bank.<sup>26</sup>

In theory, education has been an effective policy tool to remove the inequality of opportunities in the long term. But, like all other policy instruments do, education as a policy instrument is bound to have a limited influence on the female labor force participation, unless the perception of the society about woman and her role does alter and unless the appropriate legal and

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<sup>26</sup> Micro credit is a good example for the mentioned situation. See: Ecevit Y., *A Critical Approach to Women's Entrepreneurship in Turkey*, ILO, Ankara, 2007, pp. 1-79. See also: Günel G. and Aytulun Ö., *Assistance or Subjugation: The Impact of Micro credit on the Poor*, International Conference on Human and Economic Resources Proceedings Book, İzmir University of Economics, İzmir, 2006, pp.151-167.

economic conditions that would help the potential gains from education to be realized fully, are secured.

Emphasizing education on its own<sup>27</sup>, however, creates a misleading impression about women's conditions within labor market and it reduces the problems of employed women to a problem of "personal" skills and development. It leads to a false perception as if educated women do not face difficulties within labor market and as if education is the key to end all problems. This way of problem management overlooks the multidimensional structure of the issue and makes the other aspects of the problem invisible; so to say it makes them trivialized before the society. Stressing the importance of education for women is a significant but incomplete discourse. It is very hard to come across a study that goes beyond education when the issue is women's secondary position. The higher likelihood of being published of these studies explains the inflation of education-focused studies to some extent. The words of Özbay are meaningful in this context:

It would be more meaningful to defend the thesis that women take part in production at very low status as a result of their oppressed position and thus although majority of them are productive their activities are not considered as economic activity instead of the thesis that they are oppressed within given relations of hegemony for not taking part in production (Özbay, 1990: 124).<sup>28</sup>

To this end, firstly an overview of the Turkish labor market will be presented. The Turkish labor market is apparently gender-biased. This discriminative character of the labor market is noticeable within the context of concentration mostly in lower paid, irregular, uncovered jobs mostly considered as fit for women, high rates of unemployment and difficulties in promotion. Structural adjustment programmes and export oriented growth strategies

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<sup>27</sup> Within the context of this way of thinking, universities are no different from vocational training. Through the populist policy implementations, universities are increasing in numbers while the education given fall off in quality.

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Toksöz, G., *Women's Employment Situation in Turkey*, International Labour Organization (ILO), Ankara, 2007, p. 56.

following globalization pattern of the 1980s brought about various difficulties, despite potential opportunities within the context of female labour (Onaran and Başlevent, 2004).

For the sake of competitiveness in world markets, many governments applied deregulation whereby labour force protective legislation was either revoked or made ineffective on the ground that they were too “rigid”.

## **2.1. General Review**

The negative effects of the 1980-82 crisis in developing countries were widely tried to be overcome by the orthodox neoclassical policies of structural adjustment programmes. Turkey also attempted to deal with the 1977-79 foreign exchange crises by means of a set of structural reforms intended to integrate markets with the world capital markets.

Turkey initiated its process of integration with the world market in 1980. The post 1980 adjustment process of Turkey can be analyzed as two sub-phases of which are “1981-1988” and “1989-1998” (Boratav et al., 2000).

This first phase of eight years can be considered as the phase of “the export-led growth” that can be characterized by export promotion and commodity trade liberalization (Boratav et al., 2000). Over this first phase, the integration to the international markets was obtained rather by means of commodity trade liberalization. Export promotion mainly through direct export subsidies, controls on capital inflows under a regulated exchange rate system were the major features of the mentioned phase. The freedoms of movement of capital and rising competitiveness have given rise to pressures for minimizing costs of labor at the national level. This was followed by the suppression of wage incomes as another significant economic policy implementation of the phase. Decreasing domestic demand by lowering real wages was a fundamental component of the export-led industrialization process of the 1980s. By this, creating an exportable surplus and having the costs of production decreased in order to achieve comparative advantages was aimed at; since the integration to

the world markets was assumed to be attained via commodity trade liberalization in the early 1980s (Boratav et al., 2000).

The process of the liberalization of trade and of capital movements required "...a programme for destroying collective structures which may impede the pure market logic" (Bourdieu, 1998).<sup>29</sup> In the name of economic efficiency and competitiveness, the structural adjustment reforms focused on providing "flexibility" in labor market arrangements and budget cuttings in the shares of education, health and social security systems, "the totality of which is usually referred to as the welfare state" (Boratav et al., 2000: 29), and in order to reorganize the labor market, the constitutional rights secured by the law of 1962, were restricted by the 1981 law. The employment of unregistered and marginal labor has increased exponentially in the Turkish market since 1980s (Boratav et al., 2000).

The orthodox adjustment program of the first phase had also impaired the real public expenditures; equally social spending potential. One of the most significant consequence ensuing from the adjustment attempts to free market mechanisms has been the narrowed domain of government sector. Many public enterprises were transferred to private ownership via privatization.<sup>30</sup> The government sector has gradually withdrawn from production while the share of government sector in total fixed capital investments has also been reduced since 1980. The private sector has begun to supply almost the entire fixed capital investments (Toksöz, 2007: 7).<sup>31</sup> The share of fixed capital investments by the

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<sup>29</sup> Quoted in Yeldan, E., *The Developmental Agenda in the Age of Neoliberal Globalization*, UNRISD meeting on "The Need to Rethink Development Economics", Cape Town, 2001, p. 3.

<sup>30</sup> For a general review of the privatization, See: Karataş, C., *Privatization in Turkey: Implementation, Politics of Privatization and Performance Results*, Journal of International Development, Vol.13, 2001, pp. 93-121. See also: Yeldan E.A., *Assessing the Privatization Experience of Turkey: Implementation, Politics and Performance Results*, Economic Policy Institute, 2005, pp.1-57. For another helpful reading, see: Birdsall N., Nellis J., *Winners and Losers: Assessing the Distributional Impact of Privatization*, World Development, Vol.31 No.10, 2003, pp. 1617-1633. See also: Çakmak E., Zaim, O., *Privatization and Comparative Efficiency of Public and Private Enterprise in Turkey: the Cement Industry*, Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics, Vol. 63 issue 2, 1992, pp. 271-284. For another beneficial reading on the wage losses of the workers after privatization, see: Tansel A., *Effects of Privatization on Labor in Turkey*, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), 2002a, pp. 1-19.

<sup>31</sup> In order to comprehend the course of economy, one can take a glance at the share of sectors in fixed capital investment made by private sector. In 2006 fixed capital investments by private

public sector in GDP was 3.9% in 2006 (Toksöz, 2007: 8). The share of sectors in public investments for the same year goes as follows: Transportation-communication 31%; energy 14.2%; education 14%; agriculture 7.6% and health 7.1% (Toksöz, 2007: 8). The attempts of liberalization of trade and capital movements have reduced the functionality of the autonomous decision making powers of the nation state in regulating domestic economy.

This “classical export-led growth phase” ceased and reached its limits by 1989 (Boratav et al., 2000: 5). In 1989, Turkey eliminated all impediments to capital movements by executing the 24<sup>th</sup> January Decisions of the 1980, which represented a milestone in the history of Turkish economy. Turkey adopted a more outward-oriented and market-based economic system; and by the issuance of Decree no.32, the capital account was completely liberalized. According to Decree no.32, while all residents have been given the right to deal in foreign exchange and foreign stock exchanges, non residents have been allowed to engage in all activities concerning production of all kind of goods and services. As a result of the full convertibility of the Turkish Lira, foreign currency started to be used extensively in transactions.

Thus, in order to integrate intensely with the world economy, first, all obstacles from the path of international trade were swept away; then capital movements were liberalized. In this way, outward policies were implemented towards a more liberal economic structure. The composition of GDP underwent some fundamental changes to the advantage of industry. This situation made the structure of the economy change fundamentally while the causes and the domain of the experienced crises have also acquired a different character after 1989.

Throughout the latter phase of 1989-1998, Turkey faced various problems concerning the macroeconomic equilibrium; such as low savings capacity, large fiscal gap, structural insufficiencies in the production process accompanied by imperfect competitiveness in the markets (Boratav et al., 2000:7). Due to increasing foreign borrowing by the liberalization of capital movements; hyperinflation accompanied by excessive domestic real interest rate

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sector in services, manufacturing, agriculture and mining accounted for 52.9 %, 41.9 % and 5.2% of the total, respectively (Toksöz, 2007: 7).



were solidly entrenched in the Turkish economy. The short-term capital inflows that caused the current account deficits, accompanied by mismanagement of debt were said to be the main reasons for the crisis and to engender insecurity in foreign markets about the sustainability of this situation. As a result, dramatic capital outflows were experienced, which resulted in a deep financial crisis in 1994 (Celasun, 1998). In April 1994, a “new” stabilization package was on the agenda; which consisted of tight monetary and fiscal policies just as in the previous ones. However, the fall of GDP, the jump of inflation to the extreme levels and increase of interest rate to extraordinary levels could not be avoided via this standard recipe. Extreme current account deficit, unsustainable internal debt, runaway inflation excessive interest rates, stagnant structural difficulties combined with the influences of Russian and Asian crises broke down the resistance of the economy; by this economic distress the policies became unsustainable in the late 1990s.

The pre-existing structural problems in the labor market deepened after the experienced economic crises in the post 1990 period. The cost of the crisis was carried on the shoulders of labor force in most of the sectors. The liberalization of the capital account, the opening up to trade, and financial flows influenced the social redistribution; the costs of adjustment processes were shifted mostly on wage earners and the peasantry (Boratav et al., 2000). The declines in real wages of registered wage workers and in the real incomes in agriculture exceeded the macroeconomic cost of the 1994 crisis by considerable margins. “This implies that certain groups within the bourgeoisie may, actually, have benefited from crisis conditions in absolute terms” (Boratav et al., 2000: 29).

The successive crises in November 2000 and February 2001 have obviously affected the labor market more unfavorably and deeply compared to the 1994 crisis. The dismissals went increasing rapidly; the unemployment rate exceeded 10% and many businesses went bankrupt. The distinctive feature of the crisis in 2001 was the rapid increase in unemployment; especially among the skilled labor. The rapid increase in the unemployment rate, the decline in real wages and the dramatic augmentation of the informal economy were the main effects of the crisis to the labor market structure. None of the mentioned

problems has seemed to be recovered yet despite the relative recovery in the macroeconomic indicators.

After successive crises in November 2000 and February 2001, the “Transition to the Strong Economy Program”<sup>32</sup> supervised by IMF was launched in May 2001; with the claim of decreasing inflation to a reasonable level and providing a permanent growth process. The program sounded as if it included entirely a new point of view from the previous programmes managed under the supervision of the IMF. However, it consisted of tight fiscal policy including drastic cuts in wages and public spending.

The results, however, did not meet the expectations of the mainstream agencies. By the end of 2001, GDP reduced by 7.8% and the unemployment rate being 6.5% in 2000, jumped to 8.4% (Yeldan, 2002: 14).<sup>33</sup> The contractionary policies and supply-side programmes of the Bretton Woods institutions did not come up with the desirable outcomes. According to the perception of the IMF and World Bank, the responsibility for the failure of the programmes belongs to the government, which was not able to implement the policies properly; so to say, the failure was associated with technical neglects in “administrative mismanagement” (Yeldan, 2002: 4). However, Turkey was not the only country that failed to overcome crises by the mainstream policies and unsurprisingly, the contents of the adjustment programmes for each country were pretty much alike (BSB, 2006). The distinctive characteristic of the post 1990 crises is that they occurred after the deregulation of capital movements. Extreme current account deficit, unsustainable internal debt, runaway inflation, excessive interest rates, stagnant structural difficulties were not actually the reasons, but the consequences of integration process with the world markets. Yeldan summarizes this process briefly but masterly:

...it is observed that the 2000/2001 crisis administration in Turkey primarily works as a debt-management program. In this sense, it is understood that the main purpose of the

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<sup>32</sup> For the program document, see: [http://www.tcmb.gov.tr/yeni/duyuru/eko\\_program/program.pdf](http://www.tcmb.gov.tr/yeni/duyuru/eko_program/program.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> The unemployment rates are taken from TURKSTAT, Household Labour Results Survey. Table-21 (p. 90-91) can be seen in this term.

IMF-led salvation packages that are hailed as big successes in the international media is actually an operation of foreign debt roll-over, aiming at gaining the confidence of the international arbiters and financial speculators. We observe that what lies behind the colourful jargon of “effective and transparent government”, “good governance”, and “credibility” is a set of structural transformations to ultimately satisfy the needs and demands of the foreign capital centers, rather than the strategic requirements of the domestic economy. In essence, this model depends on the contractionary monetary and finance policies, and assumes an open (i.e. dependent on foreign capital) economic structure ensuring the liberalization of the international capital flows. In this model what is really meant by the concept of “stabilization” is to establish an exchange rate system purified from devaluation risk, and to maintain a high real return in the national financial markets to attract the inflow of foreign capital (Yeldan, 2002: 11).

By the elections in November 2002, the Justice and Development Party known as conservative, center-right-wing, and neoliberal came to the power and in the same year a new disinflation program<sup>34</sup> was declared. Turkey, once again, started to experience a period of speculative economic growth that was not accompanied by employment creation and financed mostly by capital inflows (Pamukçu and Yeldan, 2004). Unemployment continued to increase at a growing rate after the crises (TURKSTAT, 2007: 159).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> In 1998 and 1999; disinflation programs leaded by IMF were introduced; but these programs fell short of compensating hyperinflation.

<sup>35</sup> According to the report of the Turkish Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association (TUSIAD) (2004), the reasons behind unemployment in developing and developed countries display radical differences. Unemployment in developed countries has been received as a structural problem discussed within the framework of rigidity and flexibility while the main reason behind unemployment in developing countries has been assessed as accelerating population rate and transfers from agricultural sector to industry and services. Therefore in order to cope with the problem of unemployment, the priority should be given to the employment creation process, which necessitates new investments at first place. The report also stresses the indirect relation between lower cost of labor (concerning premium payments of employer and employee, compensation payments, income taxes etc.) and investment incentives in increasing employment capacity. However, reduction in taxes on employment has an indirect effect on

A new labor law, which has been known as No. 4857, was introduced on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2003.<sup>36</sup> The mentioned labor law claimed to be a solution to the unemployment problem. However, the main motive behind this law modification was to make the labor market more “flexible”. Labor market regulations are seen as the origin of the problem, which create rigidities and high costs of labor while labor market rigidity has been considered as the main reason for the unemployment by the mainstream policy agendas.<sup>37</sup> Flexibility in the labor market has been said to be provided via decreasing severance pay and payroll taxes that refer to minimize the cost of hiring and firing workers. This point of view reflects a supply side approach that focuses on the needs of employers and approaches the issue from the viewpoint of the employer without regarding the rights of workers as a something essential to be protected. For instance, by the new labor law, the right to decide working hours of employees in the case of necessity was given to the employer (Taymaz and Özler, 2004: 9, 23, 36). Since the social security payments are calculated according to number of days worked; not number of hours worked, by this arrangement, employers have had the right to exploit the present labor force in the firm as much as possible, so to say in the official manner, the right to increase “productivity” rather than hiring new workers. Productivity has been gained as the expense of worsening the conditions of workers in the workplace.<sup>38</sup>

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stimulating investments (Levent and Orhan, 2004). In the report, the importance of demand side implementations rather supply side policies regarding cost approach are highlighted from a Keynesian point of view.

<sup>36</sup> The full document of the law is available on:

[http://mevzuat.basbakanlik.gov.tr/Metin.Aspx?MevzuatKod=1.5.4857andMevzuatIliski=0andsourceXmlSearch=?category\\_id=5](http://mevzuat.basbakanlik.gov.tr/Metin.Aspx?MevzuatKod=1.5.4857andMevzuatIliski=0andsourceXmlSearch=?category_id=5)

<sup>37</sup> For instance, see: The World Bank (WB), *Turkey Labor Market Study*, Report No. 33254-TR, 2006, pp. 1-137. See also: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *Turkey*, OECD Economic Surveys, Vol. 14, 2008, pp. 1-167.

<sup>38</sup> The labor market flexibility is also highlighted by the international agendas, namely the World Bank and OECD, in terms of its female labor force participation-improving influence. It is claimed that the flexibility of working time arrangements improves women’s participation in the labor force, since “the possibility to work part time helps women to combine work with family responsibilities” (Jaumotte, 2005: 9). For similar statements of the World Bank about women and flexibility, see: The World Bank (WB), *Turkey Labor Market Study*, Report No. 33254-TR, 2006, pp. 1-137. However, it is open to question to what extent this perception helps women to get rid of the impression of their traditional roles. For understanding the background of this

Since the 1980s the Turkish governments has been some of those which adopted the structural adjustment and stabilization programmes of IMF and the World Bank to deal the country's economic problems. In spite of following these programmes, which have a supply side character, Turkey has not been able to overcome her fundamental problems. Apart from not solving the problems, these programmes deepened the problem of unemployment by imposing low wage strategy that was introduced as a miraculous remedy for employment growth. But the consequence was just opposed to the expectations of mainstream agencies.

Turkey failed to stimulate employment and long term economic growth simultaneously by following supply-side low wage strategy (Boratav et al, 2000; Voyvoda and Yeldan, 2001, 2005; Onaran and Avşar, 2006).<sup>39</sup>

The phenomenon of growth without employment creation is still a reality of present day Turkey. Full employment, in the sense that those who want jobs can easily find them, has never been seen as a policy target by policy makers in Turkey. The priority was always given to anti-inflationary policies. Turkey holds her place among the first twenty countries of the world when the issue is national income size (Toksöz, 2007). The problem is the low GDP per capita (OECD, 2008: 31) and the fact that the national income is badly distributed. Despite the high rates of economic growth, the growth story of Turkey has been interrupted by economic crises in quick succession, which have deepened the existent social and economic polarities and brought about high costs from all points of view at the time of each crisis.

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hypothesis, See: Mincer, J., *Labor Force Participation of Married Women: A Study of Labor Supply*, National Bureau of Economic Search, Colombia University Press, 1962, pp. 63-105. See also: Standing, G., *Global Feminization through Flexible Labour*, World Development, Vol. 17, No.7, 1989, pp. 1077-1096.

<sup>39</sup> The failure of demand suppression policies via low wage strategy in creating employment makes one think about whether this failure has something to do with the negligence of the impact of real wages on effective demand.

## 2.2. Demographic Structure

In order to understand the general characteristics of the Turkish labour market fully, it is essential to have basic knowledge about the characteristic of the distribution of population. Since, in the lack of this basic knowledge, following data would not make any sense in the context of the relative significance of the quantity. To this end, in this part, the demographic structure of the population will be considered first.

**TABLE 1: Total, City and Village Population by Sex, (1970-2000)  
(Percentage)**

Census year		Population			Share (%)	
		Total	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	1970	35605176	18006986	17598190	50.6	49.4
	1975	40347719	20744730	19602989	51.4	48.6
	1980	44736957	22695362	22041595	50.7	49.3
	1985	50664458	25671975	24992483	50.7	49.3
	1990	56473035	28607047	27865988	50.7	49.3
	2000	67803927	34346735	33457192	50.7	49.3
City	1970	13691101	7312714	6378387	53.4	46.6
	1975	16869068	9004842	7864226	53.4	46.6
	1980	19645007	10272130	9372877	52.3	47.7
	1985	26865757	14010662	12855095	52.2	47.8
	1990	33326351	17247553	16078798	51.8	48.2
	2000	44006274	22427603	21578671	51.0	49.0
Village	1970	21914075	10694272	11219803	48.8	51.2
	1975	23478651	11739888	11738763	50.0	50.0
	1980	25091950	12423232	12668718	49.5	50.5
	1985	23798701	11661313	12137388	49.0	51.0
	1990	23146684	11359494	11787190	49.1	50.9
	2000	23797653	11919132	11878521	50.1	49.9

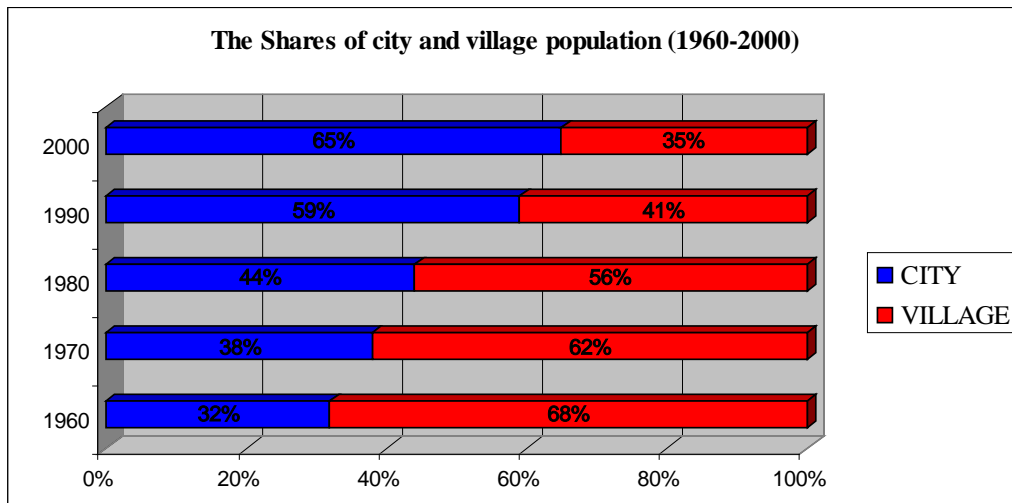
Source: (TURKSTAT, 2007: 9).

According to the last official general census of population statistics conducted in the year 2000 by TURKSTAT, Turkey has a population of almost

68 million; nearly double the population in 1970.<sup>40</sup> As can be seen in the Table 1, the population by gender seems to display an even distribution in terms of both the total and city-village location. However, this hides the effects of the migration on the disparity between provinces.

Population growth acquires different characteristics in urban and rural areas.<sup>41</sup> Population grows gradually in urban areas compared to rural ones. While accounting for 38% of the total population in the 1970s, the share of the urban population approximated 65% of the total population in the year 2000; whereas the share of the rural population in the total population for the mentioned years decreased from 62% to 35% (See: Figure 1).<sup>42</sup> This situation shows that rural-to-urban migration, as a fact of Turkey, continues to exist.

**FIGURE 1:**



*Source: TURKSTAT, General Census of Population.*

The distribution of the population between urban and rural areas has altered radically since 1960. In 1960 a significant part of the population, --over

<sup>40</sup> According to the General Census of Population based on Address System conducted by TURKSTAT, in 2007, Turkey has a population of 70.586.256 of which 35.376.533 were males and 35.209.723 were females.

<sup>41</sup> TURKSTAT prefers to use city and village distinction in the General Censuses of Population data, while using urban and rural area distinction in the Household Labour Force Surveys. Urban areas are defined by the TURKSTAT as areas with 20.001 and over inhabitants, rural areas as where 20.000 or less than 20.000 inhabitants live.

<sup>42</sup> In 2007, 70.5 % of the population lived in urban areas.

two thirds--, lived in villages. For the year 2000 the situation was just the reverse; two thirds of the population lived in urban areas. Furthermore, according to World Bank estimations, the share of Turkey's urban population is expected to reach 80 percent of the total population by 2050 (The World Bank, 2006).

The migration phenomenon has made its mark on the Turkish social, economic and political alternations experienced especially since the 1990s. The internal migration affected millions' lives directly and indirectly, but not always in the same ways. Within the migration literature, the issues related to migration have mainly been handled from a male-dominated point of view which considers women as passive subjects of the migration process. In the context of the sexual division of labor, female and male migrants have experienced different experiences within the migration process. The literature concerning the examination of the Turkish internal migration experiences within a gender-based framework has newly emerged. Some of these few studies argue that there exist significant dissimilarities between female and male migrants in the effects of the migration on their lives (For instance, see: Kadioğlu, 1994; Erman, 1997; Ayata, 2003).

However, the problem with the literature does not come to an end here. There are also annoying points to notice within the studies examining the migration experiences from women's standpoint. Various generalized judgments about the effects of the migration process are male-dominated in most of these mentioned studies. The migration from villages to cities has mostly been considered as a liberating process for women in a romanticized manner under the assumption of being saved from the oppressive, traditional way of life that is equated with rural areas and in the context of the new potential opportunities identified with urban areas. However, migration does not necessarily mean salvation or a fairy story. On the contrary it may mean a harder and economically more dependent way of life due to the limited work opportunities.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, there is no single profile of female migrants'

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<sup>43</sup> For female migrants' thoughts and desires about returning back to their home, see: (Ergüneş and Özdoğan, 2007: 59-67). For an excellent book concerning interviews with forced migrants, see: Bozkurt, S., Dinç, N., Işık, A., and Kömürcü Toptaş, M., *Göç Hikayeleri (Migration*



experiences. Due to many different reasons such as the motive behind the decision of migration, the socio-economic status, and family structure of the migrant, the acuteness of social, cultural or economic incompatibility between the previous and recent living areas, the experiences of women may vary (İlkkaracan and İlkkaracan, 1998).

Internal migration has altered the distribution of the population between urban and rural areas.<sup>44</sup> In general terms, due to the different characteristics of rural and urban labor markets, this trend of redistribution of urban and rural population has had extensive influences applying to all fields of the society and national economy. In particular, overurbanization<sup>45</sup> has its influences on the

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*Stories*), Göç Mağdurları ile Sosyal Yardımlaşma, Dayanışma ve Kültür Derneği (Association for Culture and the Solidarity with the Displaced) (GÖÇDER), 2008.

<sup>44</sup> Besides the “voluntary” migration, forced migration is a fact of Turkey. Kurds, mostly living in rural Southeastern Turkey before 1980, have been forced to migrate from their villages after 1984. The martial law of 12<sup>th</sup> September 1980, evacuation of villages for security reasons, pressures of PKK guerillas and village guards, increased killings by unknowns made rural living unbearable in the region (For some interviews made with forced migrants see: <http://www.diyarbakirgocder.org/private.php?case=2>). The forced migration differs from migration for economic reasons in terms of alienation and a tendency to radical behavior. Migrants live mostly in the “ghettoes” of the urban areas, work under difficult conditions and lead a hard life both psychologically and economically. For a fruitful field study on the forced migration in Turkey, see Meçin M., the *Question of Urban Integration and Forced Migration from East and Southeast Anatolian Regions after 1980: The Case of Mersin*, the Thesis Submitted to METU, the Department of Urban Policy Planning and Local Governments, May 2004, pp. 1-236. See also: Ayata, B., and Yüksek D., *A Belated Awakening: National and International Responses to the Internal Displacement of Kurds in Turkey*, New Perspectives on Turkey, Vol. 32, 2005, pp. 5-42. See also: Ergüneş, R., and Özdoğan, D., *5233 Sayılı Yasa ve Uygulamalarının Diyarbakır Ölçeğinde Araştırılması (The Research on the Law No. 5233 and its Applications on the Scale of Diyarbakır)*, Göç Mağdurları ile Sosyal Yardımlaşma, Dayanışma ve Kültür Derneği (Association for Culture and the Solidarity with the Displaced) (GÖÇDER), 2007, pp. 1-82. Besides internal migration, the effects of emigration on the labor force structure are undeniable. In 1961, Turkey and Germany arranged a settlement which aimed both to meet the labor force deficiency of Germany and to lighten the problem of surplus labor force of Turkey. Similar agreements with the same aims were also made between Turkey and some other European countries, such as Austria, Holland, Sweden and Belgium. Approximately 3.2 million compatriots live in Europe (Kirişçi, 2003). There were also emigrants who left for countries in the Middle East and North Africa, especially after the 1973 oil crisis and political refugees left for mostly European Countries after the 1980 military coup. For some extensive reading about Turkey’s emigration story and its effects, see: Martin, Philip L., *The Unfinished Story: Turkish Labour Migration to Western Europe: With Special Reference to the Federal Republic of Germany*, ILO, Geneva, 1991. See: İçduygu, A., I. Sirkeci and G. Muradoğlu, *Socio-economic Development and International Migration: A Turkish Study*, International Migration, Vol. 39, No.4, 2001, pp. 40-61.

<sup>45</sup> Theorists have tried to clarify the drives behind overurbanization in the “Third” World countries for decades. One can group the main explanations into three main schools of thought, which are the rural-push and urban-pull perspective, the neo-Malthusian perspective, and the dependency perspective. For more information about these perspectives, see: Shandra M.J., London B. and Williamson J.B., *Environmental Degradation, Environmental Sustainability, and*

structure of labor market, specifically on the inter-sectoral redistribution of labor force, the state of employment and unemployment to some extent.

### **2.3. Labor Force Participation**

The question of ‘how women’s participation in labor force differs with the level of economic development’ has occupied academic spheres since the release of Boserup’s reference book titled *Woman's Role in Economic Development* in which she criticizes the marginalization of women with economic development.

The most widely accepted of various models concerning the relationship between women’s participation in labor force and the level of economic development has been ‘The Labor Supply Model’, which has mostly gone under the name of ‘U-shaped function’ model (For instance, see: Oppenheimer, 1970; Durand, 1975; Blumberg, 1978; Heckman, 1978; Tilly and Scott, 1978; Schultz, 1989; Goldin 1989; Boserup, 1990; Goldin, 1994; Tansel, 2002b).

The model holds that the economic development process, the industrialization, the introduction of new technologies in production, and the expansion of the market economies in particular, initially restricts the possibility of women’s employment and leads to a decline in women’s labor force participation partly by causing the inter-sectoral redistribution of the labor force and partly by increasing the family income effect. This redistribution of the labor force refers to a shift in the composition of the labor force out of agricultural sector into manufacturing and services. The elimination of traditional way of production in home-based businesses, in which women are largely employed, forces women to seek jobs in industry, in which they have difficulties. This process results in either women falling out of employment or the concentration of female employment in informal and tertiary sectors. That refers to increasing gender inequality and the loss of status of women. It is contended within this model that as economic development improves, the

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*Overurbanization in the Developing World: a Quantitative, Cross-National Analysis*, Social Perspectives, Vol. 46, no.3, 2003, pp. 309-329.

opportunities for women to enjoy higher levels of education will also improve, and thus women will be able to participate in labor force, again, and this time they will be “holding mainly white-collar jobs” (Mammen and Paxson, 2000: 144). This hypothesis of the U-shaped relationship between female labor force participation and economic development is argued in the mentioned studies above in the context of ‘income’ and ‘substitution’ effects;

The reasons for the downward portion of the U are probably found in a combination of an initially strong income effect and a weak substitution effect, and a change in the locus of production from the home to the factory. Why the function changes direction holds the key to why women enter the labor force at higher stages of economic development and why their social, political, and legal status generally improves with economic progress. The reasons were sought in the change in the education of females relative to males as educational resource constraints are relaxed, and in women’s ability to obtain jobs in the white-collar sector after school completion. Their increased education and their ability, to work in more prestigious occupations both increases the substitution effect and decreases the income effect. As the substitution effect begins to swamp the income effect, the upward portion of the U is bated out, and women’s labor force participation enters the modern era (Goldin, 1994: 25-6).

In this model, the perception of the ‘linear’ economic development that refers to the same processes to be experienced for all countries is implied. The per capita GDP is accepted as the main index of the level of economic development, and the increase in female labor force participation is associated with increasing educational opportunities thanks to the increasing per capita income level. Thus, the possible effects of the composition of labor force, distribution of population among regions, family size, specialized trade relations, trade dependency of the country, the extent of the income inequality, sectoral and occupational gender stratification, change in the labor force size,

social norms that prevents women to be employed in blue-collar jobs, are ignored (Tanaka and Pampel, 1986: 601). Furthermore, the fact that economic development influences variously the self-employed, unpaid family workers and wage-employees has been neglected.

The participation rate of women in labor force compared to that of men is a significant benchmark of their status in society, as well. What is more important, however, is what changes in the daily lives of women by the increased labor force participation outside the private sphere. Does this increased participation result in a radical improvement in the status of women, or do they adopt similar roles in labor market to those of social and traditional ones?

To this end, this section of the chapter consists of four sub-sections First, an overview of the composition of labor force of contemporary Turkey and its changing structure in time is presented. The second sub-section titled 'Reasons for not being in labor force' is related to the obstacles that prevent women to participate in labor force. In the third sub-section, the non-linear effect of the age on female labor force participation is handled. This part is important, since it shows how the commercialization of childcare services and the expectations from women in the private sphere may influence their employment decision and the duration of staying in labor force. The last sub-section is concerned with the influence of the educational level on female labor force participation in contemporary Turkey. It is hypothesized that a higher educational level positively affects the non-agricultural employability of women in formal labor market. In the agricultural sector, however, the higher educational level does not seem to have this kind of influence. Furthermore, it is only with the attainment of the university degree in which gender gap in participation rates are inclined to close down. In order to see whether education helps women to overcome the social stigma and norms, the distribution of female graduates by the fields of study in university is investigated.

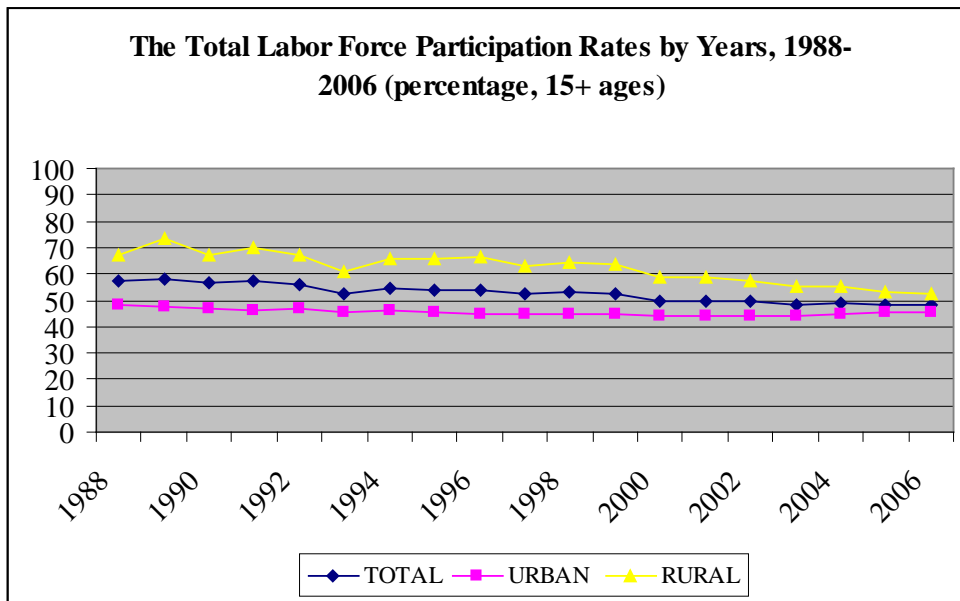
### **2.3.1. An Overview**

Labor force participation rate is identified as “the ratio of labor force to non-institutional working age population” (TURKSTAT, 2007: 155). In order to understand this definition, the contexts of “labor force”, “non-institutional civilian population” and “working age population” should be defined. The labor force indicates “all employed persons and unemployed” (TURKSTAT, *ibid.*). While non-institutional civilian population involves “all the population, [except] the residents of schools, dormitories, kindergartens, rest homes for elderly persons, special hospitals, military barracks and recreation quarters for officers”, non-institutional working age population represents “the population 15 years of age and over within the non-institutional civilian population” (TURKSTAT, *ibid.*). Thus, thanks to labor force participation rate, it is possible to obtain an opinion about the situation of working age population in the labor market and about whether the economically active population can be employed sufficiently.

In the Figure 2, the overall labor force participation rates are given by urban-rural distinction between 1988 and 2006. The overall labor force participation has been decreasing in the mentioned period, and this drop mainly results from the fall in the rural labor force participation. In 1990, the overall labor force participation rate was 56.6%, and reduced to 48% in 2006. For the years 1990 and 2006, the total urban labor force participation rate was 47.2% and 45.5%, respectively. The overall rural labor force participation was 66.9% and 52.2%, respectively.

According to the October 2007 findings, total labor force at age 15 and over was 25,208,000 and the total labor force participation rate was 47.7%. This means that only 47.7% of the total working age population takes place in labor market, so to say, one in every two of working age population was neither employed nor unemployed.

**FIGURE 2:**



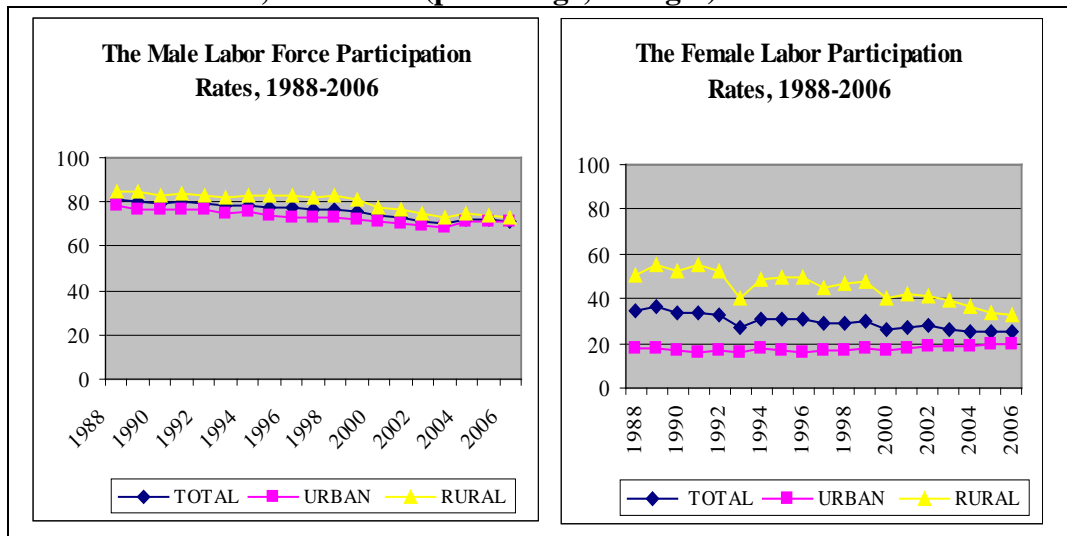
Source: (TURKSTAT, 2007: 159-161).

While examining the labor force participation by gender, serious differences come into the picture. In October 2007, while the total labor force participation rate for females was 24.4%, it was 71.9% for males. While the male working age population was 26.118.000, the female population at working age was 26.678.000. Despite the close numbers of the working age populations by gender, the female labor force participation rate has always been lower than male's. Of the total labor force, 6.497.000 persons were females and 18.711.000 were males. In other words, only one in every four in total labor force was a woman.

Compared with the international data, the female labor force participation rates are quite low in Turkey, as well. In Turkey, female employment did not increase as it did in 'developed' economies. While the average world figure for the female labor force participation was 52.5% in 2007, it was 33.3% for the Middle East region. Furthermore, for the same year, the average world figure for female unemployment rate was 6.4%, while the same rate was 11% for Turkey; so to say nearly the double (ILO, 2008: 24).<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> In the mentioned study of ILO, Turkey has its place among the Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS countries. This group consists of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Turkey (ILO,

**FIGURE 3: The Labor Force Participation Rates by Years and Urban-Rural Distinction, 1988-2006 (percentage, 15+ ages)**



Source: (TURKSTAT, 2007: 159-161).

While labor force participation rate for males has been slightly decreasing over years, the fall in female labor force participation rate has been more noticeable. As can be seen from Figure 3 and Table 2, Female labor force participation rates manifest a falling trend since the 1990s in Turkey. In October 2007, only one in every four in total labor force was a woman, and only one in every five women was in labor force. This trend of decrease has especially been true when the issue is rural female participation. In Turkey, the female labor force participation has been always low compared to that of men, and it has been decreasing further due to the narrowing agricultural employment within years.

The highest labor force participation rates are observed for rural men, and the lowest rates are related to urban women (See: Figure 3). Considering the October 2007 statistics, while the male labor force participation was 71.1% for urban areas, it was 72.7% in rural areas. There is no big difference resulting from urban-rural distribution in labor force participation for males. For females, however, the labor force participation was 19.9% in urban areas, while it was 32% in rural ones. Only one woman in three in rural areas and one woman in five in urban areas was in the labor force.

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2008: 28). However, looking at the statistics, Turkey displays a closer state to the Middle East averages than the non EU and CIS group.

It is observed that the labor force participation rates in rural areas for both sexes seem to be higher than in urban ones. The major reason for this is that a significant part of the rural population has been employed in agricultural activities while the employment opportunities for an “unqualified” labor force remain limited in urban areas. The female participation rate has started to show a declining tendency since the 1980s. Rural female participation rate was 53.4% in 1990, 40.2% in 2000. In the same period, urban labor force participation rate for women did not seem to present a radical change; it was 18.1% in 1990, 17.2% in 2000. This shows that the fall in female labor force participation is closely related to the shrinking opportunities for agricultural employment within the post-liberalization process.

The agricultural sector and its problems have comparatively been neglected in Turkey. The rapid and significant decrease in the agricultural employment and the absence of policies to prevent or compensate for this decrease are the most important indicators of this negligence. In this context women, who have constituted the main contributor group of the agricultural production, have been neglected twice both by the official agenda and academic studies in economics concerning the agricultural sector.<sup>47</sup>

By far, however, the agricultural sector has always been the major sector in which women have been employed. Despite the rapid shrinkage in

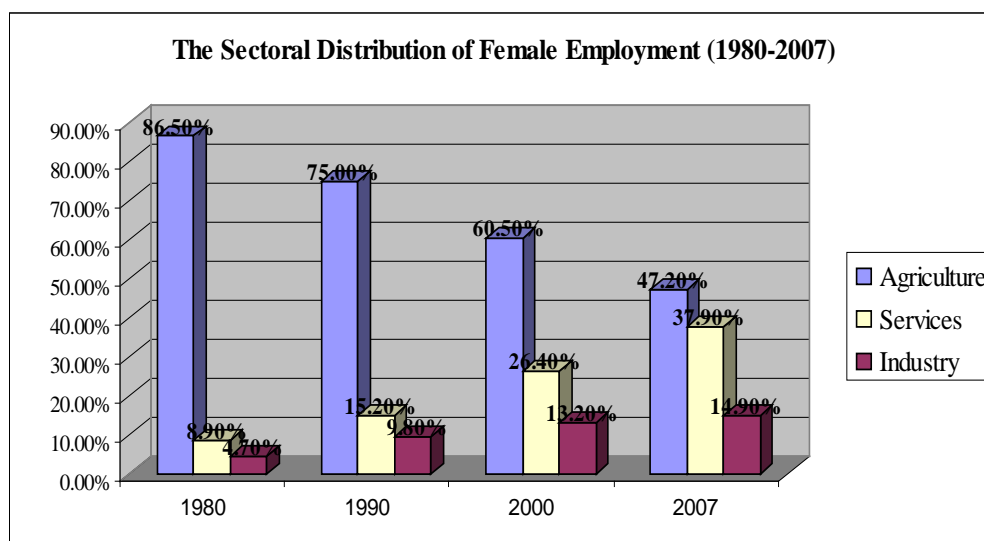
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<sup>47</sup> The agricultural employment and the problems of the agricultural workers have mostly been ignored within the debates on the agricultural reforms, and the priority has been given to the technical debate of the macroeconomic effects of the ongoing reform policies in the agricultural sector within the adaptation process of Turkey to the European Union. The role of women in the agricultural production and the potential effects of these reforms on female participation have totally been ignored by the national agenda. For instance, in the Ninth Development Plan (2007-2013), in none of the chapters, the mentioned issue has taken place. Furthermore, the word ‘women’ is mentioned mainly with the other ‘vulnerable’ and ‘dependent’ groups such as ‘the elderly, children, the handicapped, and the unemployed’. This leads to a misperception as if women, who account for the half of the population, constitute a minority in society, and it shows how the government approaches women’s problems. See: T.R. Prime Ministry, State Planning Organization (SPO), *Ninth Development Plan (2007-2013)*, Ankara, 2006, pp. 1-127. The sensitivity of the economists in the academic circles to rural women’s problems is not more satisfying than that of the national agenda, either. For instance, within the following well-known books about the Turkish agricultural system, in none of the chapters rural women or their problems are discussed. See: Boratav, K., *Tarımsal Yapılar ve Kapitalizm (The Agricultural Structures and Capitalism)*, Birikim Yayınları, Ankara, 1981. See also: Dinler, Z., *Tarım Ekonomisi (The Agricultural Economics)*, Ekin Kitabevi, Bursa, 1996. See also: Kazgan, G., *Tarım ve Gelişme (Agriculture and Development)*, Istanbul Bilgi University Press, Istanbul, 2003.



employment in this sector, the fact of it being the main employer of female workers is still valid (See: Figure 4).

**FIGURE 4:**

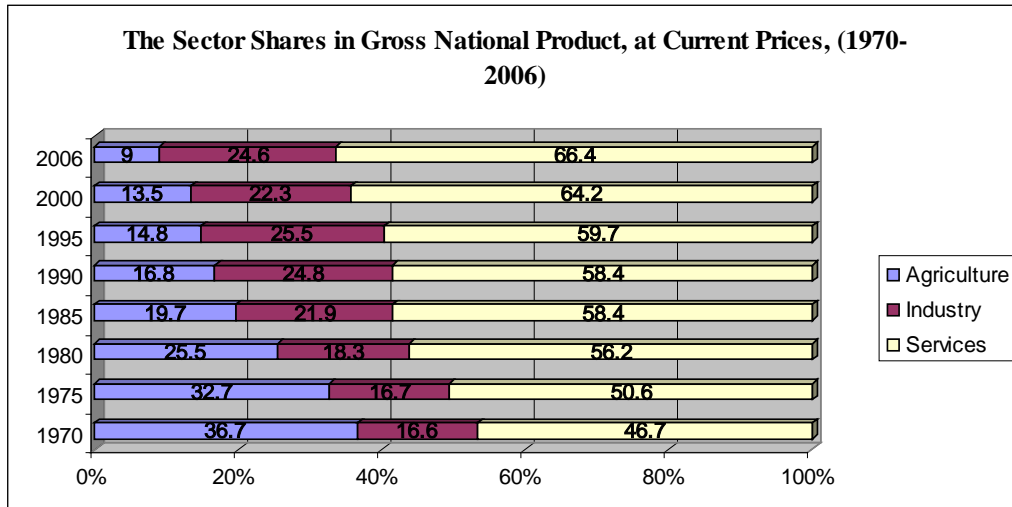


*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 1980-1990, 2000, October 2007.*

As it is observed in Figure 5, the sectoral share of agriculture in GNP has also been decreasing gradually. The share of agricultural sector in GNP was 25.5% in 1980, ended up with 9% in 2006. Since female employment concentrates in agriculture, women have negatively been influenced by any adverse event concerning agriculture. The rapid shrinkage in the agricultural sector share and employment forced many women to fall out of work. Increases in female employment in urban areas, however, remained too poor to compensate for the decline in agricultural employment. Female labor force participation rate was 18.1 % in urban areas in 1990. It improved only to 19.9% in October 2007 (See: Table 2).

A significant point to be mentioned is that high labor force participation as an index of economic development does not necessarily show a better-off situation, either. The higher female labor force participation rate compared to the urban areas does not mean that women in rural areas enjoy better economic and social conditions. In contrast, women are mainly participating as unpaid family workers on the family farms in the rural labor force, and almost all of these unpaid family workers are deprived of any social security coverage.

**FIGURE 5:**



*Source: TURKSTAT, National Accounts, October 1970-1995, 2000, 2006.*

Increased mechanization of the agricultural production processes, and the neoliberal policy implementations of the post-1980s that have led to shifts from home-based production to market-oriented production, have brought about the reduction of demand especially for female workers in rural areas and the increased economic dependency of women.

The agricultural policies followed in Turkey were one of the major factors behind the rapid decline in female labor force participation in rural areas (Toksöz, 2007: 20). The 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Development Plan of the State Planning Organization (SPO) (2000) stipulated some structural adjustment targets concerning national agricultural policies in order to reduce the cost of agricultural system on the budget and to have the agricultural system compatible with the EU, WTO and World Bank criteria and regulations (Toksöz, 2007: 29).

These adjustment policies involved some cost-diminishing strategies within the context of competitive advantages, such as the reduction of the number of people being employed.

The State subsidization of domestic agricultural products was gradually narrowed. Land under cultivation was reduced and direct price subsidizations to farmers were terminated. These declines have been experienced mainly in tea, cotton, sugar, and hazel nut production where women are mostly employed (Yıldırak et. al., 2003). Deterrence-oriented and indirect policies were also implemented, such as setting the same floor price for many times in a row and

easing the import of some critical agricultural products, like cotton (Toksöz, 2007).

The direct income support to farmers instead of price subsidizations has recently been on the agenda. In the income support mechanism, payments are said to be made per acre according to the size of the land and regardless of input used, output or income level of farmers (Toksöz, 2007). It obviously serves to the interests of land owners by giving the support to the holder, not to workers. The enactment of this law has also led to substantial declines in land used, output and employment.

The effects of the gendered division of labor on economic development and internal migration have resulted in a steady decrease in female labor force participation. As can be seen in Figure 1, the growth rate of the internal migration reached its peak level during the 1990s. It has started to slow down since then. However, the share of agriculture in women's employment continues to decrease (See: Figure 4). Despite the fact that the decline in the total female labor force participation rate mainly results from the sharp decreases in rural female employment (see Figure 3), the influence of the stereotypical social roles, the educational level, the age etc. on the decreasing female labor force participation rates, can not be ignored. An analysis about women's problems takes better both the demand and supply side factors into account. In the following sub-sections, mainly the supply side effects are considered

**TABLE 2: The situation of the Labor Force, (1990-2007) (Thousand; Percentage)**

	1990		1995		2000		2005		2006		2007	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Total Labor Force	11523	9029	11853	10714	10902	12176	10167	14398	9894	14882	9829	15379
Female Labor Force	4705	1682	4446	2043	3809	2379	3310	3043	3237	3243	3125	3372
Male Labor Force	6818	7347	7407	8672	7093	9797	6857	11356	6657	11640	6704	12007
Total Labor Force Participation Rate	67.8	48.2	66.2	45.5	58.7	44.1	53.1	45.5	52.2	45.5	51.8	45.5
Female Labor Force Participation Rate	53.4	18.1	49.3	17.1	40.2	17.2	33.7	19.3	33.0	19.9	32.0	19.9
Male Labor Force Participation Rate	83.4	78.0	83.3	74.5	77.9	70.9	73.5	71.5	72.7	70.8	72.7	71.1
Total Employment Rate	64.6	43.1	63.2	40.8	56.4	40.2	49.5	39.7	48.8	40.0	48.4	40.1
Female Employment Rate	51.9	14.3	48.2	13.7	39.4	15.0	32.3	16.0	31.6	16.7	30.6	16.5
Male Employment Rate	78.2	71.5	78.4	68.4	74.1	65.4	67.6	63.2	67.2	63.0	67.2	63.8
Not in the labor force (total)	5462	9697	6053	12835	7679	15454	8981	17279	9057	17835	9152	18437
Female not in the labor force	4102	7630	4567	9871	5669	11439	6506	12759	6560	13028	6634	13547
Male not in the labor force	1361	2067	1486	2964	2011	4015	2476	4520	2497	4807	2517	4889

Source: TURKSTAT, the Household Labor Force Survey (HLFS), October 1990, October 1995, 2000, 2005, 2006, October 2007.

### 2.3.2. Reasons for not being in Labor Force

The reasons for not being in labor force are identified below in terms of gender basis. Persons not in labor force consist of “persons who are neither unemployed nor employed, and 15 years of age and over”. According to the October 2007 findings, the female population at 15 years and over was 26.678.000, of which 20.181.000 were out of the labor force. This means that 75% of the working age female population is neither employed nor unemployed.

The Definitions used by TURKSTAT to categorize persons not in labor force are as below<sup>48</sup>:

- ***Not seeking a job but available to start a job:*** These are the persons who are not seeking a job for different reasons but are available for work within two weeks.
- ***Discouraged workers:*** These are the persons who are available to start a job but are not seeking a job because of not knowing where to search, or who believe no job is available for him/her in the region.
- ***Other:*** These are the persons who are not seeking a job for reasons such as being seasonal workers, busy with household chores, students, property income earners, retired, or disabled, but available to start a job.
  - ***Seasonal workers:*** Persons not seeking a job or who are not available for work because of being seasonal workers.
  - ***Household chores:*** Persons not seeking a job or who are not available for work because of doing household chores.
  - ***In education or training:*** Persons not seeking a job or who are not available for work because of attending regular school or training.
  - ***Retired persons:*** Persons not seeking a job or who are not available for work because of being retired.

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<sup>48</sup>For the definitions, see: [http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/MetaVeri.do?tb\\_id=25andust\\_id=8](http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/MetaVeri.do?tb_id=25andust_id=8)

- **Disabled, old or ill:** Persons not seeking a job or who are not available for work because of being disabled, ill or elderly.
- **Other:** Persons not seeking a job or who are not available for work because of family or personal reasons or other reasons.

The most common reason for women being out of the labor force seems to be “the household routines” expected from women. Six in every ten women remains out of the labor force for this reason. Disability, old age, illness, schooling, retirement, and others stand far behind as compared with household chores. In contrast, the reasons for males being out of the labor force display a more balanced distribution. There is an unsurprising fact needed to be mentioned: the absence of any male taking care of housework (See: Table3).

**TABLE 3: Reasons for not Being in Labor Force, 2007 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Female	%	Male	%
Population not in labor force	20181	100	7407	100
Not seeking job but ready to work	931	4.6	802	10.8
Working seasonally	232	1.1	65	0.9
Housewife	12877	63.8	-	-
Student	1623	8.0	2054	27.7
Retired	624	3.1	2724	36.8
Disabled, old or ill etc.	1978	9.8	1306	17.6
Other	1917	9.5	455	6.1

Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007.

This phenomenon shows the unabated supremacy of the sexual division of labor on the decision making processes to participate in the labor force. Housework is categorized as a non-economic activity, and women classified as “housewife” are seen as outside of labor force.<sup>49</sup> It is important to understand

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<sup>49</sup> Many feminists have argued that the role of housewife is as important and productive as that of working women; and women should demand that housework to be paid (For instance, see: Dalla Costa, 1973). This has been the drive behind the campaign ‘Wages for Housework’ which has been accused of misunderstanding of Marxism and accepting the sexual roles without questioning. However the campaign may have a meaning that calls the Left’s attention to the importance of housework and its problems. Hartmann points out that “ Dalla Costa’s political position, that women should demand wages for housework, has vastly increased consciousness of the importance of housework among women in the women’s movement” (Hartmann, 1979: 170). In the course of these private sphere debates, many modern Marxist feminists have argued that housework serves the interests of capitalist economy by reproducing the workforce, namely by enabling the human capital accumulation process and the sexual division of labor in a low

whether it reflects the perception of women themselves or of the official agencies. In the explanation made by TURKSTAT, the process of data collection is identified as follows:

Data were collected from the households which were selected by defined sampling method. Statistical unit used is household in labour force surveys. Demographic information (age, sex, educational status, relationship to household head) is asked to all members of the household. But, questions on labour force status are asked for persons 15 years old and over... All the information was collected by interviewers on a face-to-face basis with the help of portable computers (computer assisted personal interviewing)...*The questionnaire was designed considering many factors together. The international standards determined by the International Labour Organization (ILO) were taken into consideration and adapted to the Turkish circumstances.* Modifications on questionnaire were made in order to reflect possible changes occurred in time in the labour force status in Turkey and to produce internationally comparable data. In this way norm and standards of Eurostat have also been followed.<sup>50</sup>

It seems that the existing method of questionnaire does not give women the chance to introduce themselves with their own words; because the answer is

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cost rather than simply being a personal service to individual men; so it is a matter of patriarchal oppression embodied in the economic structure. On the other hand, some feminists pointed out that the economic terms and relations are not enough exclusively in order to understand the importance of domestic labor (For instance, see: Molyneux, 1979). Hartmann holds a similar opinion of the characteristic of women's exploitation with Molyneux. She asks "Who benefits from women's labor? Surely capitalists, but also surely men" (Hartmann, 1979: 171). For further reading, see: Oakley, A., *The Sociology of Housework*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1975. See also: Mies, M., *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour*, Zed Books, 1986. See also: Waring, M., *If Women Counted: A New Feminist Economics*, Harper and Row, 1988. See also: Werlhof, C., *The Proletarian is Dead; Long Live the Housewife?*, in *Households and the World-Economy*, Smith, J., Wallerstein, I., and Evers H. (eds.), Sage Publications, 1984, pp. 131-147.

<sup>50</sup> For the system of data collection, see: [http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/MetaVeri.do?tb\\_id=25andust\\_id=8](http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/MetaVeri.do?tb_id=25andust_id=8) . Emphasis added by the author, P.K.

expected to be either 'yes' or 'no'. Another important point is the need for the clarification of what is implied by the "Turkish circumstances".

The definitions of the reasons for being not in labor force used by TURKSTAT are also inadequate to perceive the social extent and aspects of the problem of marginalization from the labor force. These definitions do not provide a clear distinction of individual and external causes of being out of the labor force. Furthermore, some categories used seem to be a consequence of -- rather than being a reason for--remaining outside the labor force. For instance, being a "housewife" can not be seen as a reason for being not in labor force, apart from the individual's choice.

Due to the incorrect and subjective categorizations, no clear information can be provided about whether women who fell under the category of "housewife", who accounted for 63.8% of the female population being not in labor force (according to the October 2007 findings), were out of labor force by reasons of individual excuses or preferences, external objections, losing their courage upon finding a job, wishing to work but lacking the requested schooling or experience, and of any other reasons or not.

This kind of a categorization impedes the endeavours to understand not only the social aspects of the marginalization and the unemployment problem, but also the effects of the marginalization problem on the societal life. This kind of a categorization is unacceptable especially in a country like Turkey, where 31.4% of the female university graduates were categorized as being out of labor force due to being "housewife" in the official data set (See: Table 5). This means that according to the official agenda, the main reason of being out of labor force was to be a "housewife" for the female university graduates.

The other significant female group remaining out of the labor force consists of those "not seeking job but available to work", so to say the discouraged section, who account for 931.000 (4.6%) of the total female population being not in labor force. High unemployment, bad working conditions, low wages, and the household responsibilities expected from women mostly discourage women in the matter of joining the labor force. Of the female population being not in labor force, the number of females who are ready to work but not seeking jobs, jumped from 162,000 to 931,000 in the 1990-2007 period. The discouraged female population,



namely “female reserve army”, which accounted for 931,000, was higher than the number of unemployed females which was 717,000 in October 2007.

As can be seen in Table 4, the reasons for women being not in labor force do not differ radically within the context of urban-rural area distinction. Both in urban and rural areas the most common reason is again the household responsibilities.

**TABLE 4: Reasons for Women Being not in Labor force by Urban-Rural Distinction, 2007 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Urban	%	Rural	%
Population not in labor force	13547	100	6634	100
Not seeking job but ready to work	592	4.4	339	5.1
Working seasonally	39	0.3	194	2.9
Housewife	8591	63.4	4286	64.6
Student	1256	9.3	367	5.5
Retired	554	4.1	70	1.1
Disabled, old or ill etc.	910	6.7	1068	16.1
Other	1607	11.9	311	4.7

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007.*

As women’s educational level increases, the composition of the reasons for women not being in labor force seems to change (See: Table 5). However, ‘household chores’ keeps its place to be the most important reason of not being in labor force for women at all levels of education. Furthermore, as the educational level increases, the shares of the categories ‘not seeking job but available to work’ and ‘family or personal reasons’ increase. This indicates that both the demand and supply side factors are influential on the female labor force participation; and the problem of women’s low participation in the labor force can not be overcome by emphasizing solely the importance of education.

**TABLE 5: Reasons for Women not Being in Labor Force by Educational Level, 2007 (Thousand; Percentage)<sup>51</sup>**

	Illiterate	Below High School	High School and its equivalents	College and university
Population not in labor force	4190	12777	2717	497
Share	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Not seeking job but available to work	82	559	234	55
Share	2.0%	4.4%	8.6%	11.1%
Working seasonally	52	167	12	3
Share	1.2%	1.3%	0.4%	0.6%
Housewife	2 614	8 865	1 242	156
Share	62.4%	69.4%	45.7%	31.4%
Student	1	946	644	34
Share		7.4%	23.7%	6.8%
Retired	43	240	182	158
Share	1.0%	1.9%	6.7%	31.8%
Disabled, old or ill etc.	1 241	686	46	5
Share	29.6%	5.4%	1.7%	1.0%
Family or personal reasons	118	941	237	45
Share	2.8%	7.4%	8.7%	9.1%
Other	41	373	121	40
Share	1.0%	2.9%	4.5%	8.0%

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, October 2007.*

The potential of education can not be fully observed unless the influences of other factors on the female labor force participation, such as the traditional sexual division of labor in public and private sphere, unemployment, the lack of social security, and employment creation problem are eliminated.

<sup>51</sup> The category of “below high school” or “less than high school” consists of literate persons without any educational degree, primary school graduates, the graduates of eight years compulsory basic education and the ones having a degree of secondary school or its equivalent vocational school education. The reason for the existence of two different kinds of basic education, which are the eight years compulsory basic education and primary school, is the amendment concerning the time extension of the compulsory education in 1997 through the Act No. 4306. The category of “high school and its equivalents” involves the persons with general high school or vocational and technical high school education.

### 2.3.3. Female Labor Force Participation by Age Groups

The labor force participation rates by age groups are given in the Table 6. The total labor force participation rate for the age group of 15-24 was 38.1% in October 2007. The labor force participation rate for the young group of 15-24 has been declining since 2000. The main reason for this decline is the increase in the length of staying in education; as a result of this increase, the young population joins the labor market at older ages. Once they attempt to look for jobs, the transition process from education to employment shows its rough side.

**TABLE 6: The Labor Force Participation Rates by Age Groups, 2006 (Percentage)**

	Total	Urban	Rural
<b>Female</b>	24.9	19.9	33
15-19	17.7	13.8	23.5
20-24	31.4	29.6	34.9
25-29	31.9	30.0	35.9
29-34	30.1	26.3	37.7
35-39	31.5	25.9	42.2
40-44	29.4	21.6	43.3
45-49	24.8	15.2	41.9
50-54	21.8	10.1	39.8
55-59	18.5	6.5	34.3
60-64	14.6	4.0	26.8
65+	6.6	1.3	12.1
<b>Male</b>	71.5	70.8	72.7
15-19	35.5	33.0	40.6
20-24	72.1	70.6	75.3
25-29	91.6	92.8	89.0
29-34	94.5	96.0	91.6
35-39	94.0	95.2	91.7
40-44	92.7	93.2	91.8
45-49	82.0	79.7	86.1
50-54	65.4	58.9	76.0
55-59	51.3	40.5	66.8
60-64	39.8	25.6	57.2
65+	22.0	10.9	32.6

Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, 2006.

The highest female labor participation rate in urban areas is observed in the 20-24 and 25-29 age groups with 29.6% and 30% respectively. After the age 30, female labor force participation rates start declining gradually. On the other hand, in rural areas, female participation rate increases in parallel with age until the age of 44. This observation can be linked to the differences about median age at first birth among provinces and women with different educational background:

For women in the age group 25-49 living in urban places, the median age at first birth is 22.1. The fact that women with educational background of at least high school have their median age at first birth over 25...Among rural women in the age group 25-49 the median age at first birth is 21.1, which is lower at 20.1 for illiterate and primary school graduate women (Toksöz, 2007: 23).

Having children has affected both the demand and supply of the female labor force.<sup>52</sup> Examining Table 7, one can see that women cooperate in the care of children. Mother, mother in law, and grandmother usually rank in the top three, except the categories of illiterate mother, mother living in rural areas and mother with the high school degree and over. Elder sister usually take place in

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<sup>52</sup> There is a wide academic literature about the M shaped curve pattern of the female labor force participation by age and the relationship between the fertility decisions and labor force participation. In this literature, the issue is handled with a quite similar approach to that of the relationship between the female labor force participation and economic development. The main argument is that increasing per capita income leads to increases in female labor force participation, and this contributes to lower the fertility rates, and that means a decrease in women's responsibilities in the private sphere. Thus, women's participation in the labor market is expected to increase further. This literature has been warmly welcomed by the international agencies, namely the World Bank and OECD. Since, it provides the groundwork for the population control policies. For some pioneering studies of this literature, see: Becker, Gary S., *A Theory of the Allocation of Time*, The Economic Journal, Vol. 75, No. 299, 1965, pp. 493-517. See also: Becker, Gary S., Murphy, Kevin M., and Tamura, R., *Human Capital, Fertility, and Economic Growth*, The Journal of Political Economy, Vol. 98, No. 5, 1990, pp. S12-S37. See also: Boserup, E., and Schultz, T.P., *Economic and Demographic Relationships in Development*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990. See also: Mincer, J., and Grossbard-Shechtman, S., *Marriage and the Economy*, Cambridge University Press, 2003. For some studies in which the validity of this correlation is analyzed for Turkey, see: Timur, S., *Socioeconomic Determinants of Differential Fertility in Turkey*, in *Women's Status and Fertility in the Muslim World*, Allman, J. (ed.), Praeger Publishers, New York, 1978, pp. 54-76. See also: İsvan, N.A., *Productive and Reproductive Decisions in Turkey: The Role of Domestic Bargaining*, Journal of Marriage and the Family, Vol. 53, No. 4, 1991, pp. 1057-1107.

rising little brothers and sisters, especially in rural areas. Most of the working women exploit the other women's labor power in order to find a way to reduce the burden of the private sphere that makes the simultaneous existence of the woman in both spheres impossible. Men are rarely involved in baby-sitting. The category of husband accounts for 2.5% and elder brothers account for a share of 1.1% of the total. Women facing this difficulty do not reflect it to men and the problem of *double life* stays invisible in daily life.

Another important point to highlight is the arrangement method of the statistics used in the table. All statistics are represented as if the mother is the only person responsible for the child and the categories chosen echoes this fact; The mother's baby, the mother's educational level, the mother's living area, the mother's employment status. Women are always considered as the main person who is responsible for children and the official agencies do not seem to be exceptional. What about the illiterate fathers? Don't they bear responsibility for their children? The issue is never questioned in this respect.

Furthermore, child-care facilities seem to be insufficient both in number and quality. Furthermore, it may have a restrictive effect on female employment regardless of their educational level. According to the present labor law, workplaces with 150 or over "female" employees are "required" to provide child-care services.<sup>53</sup> Again, one faces this familiar understanding. The number of only "female" employees has been the criterion to set up a day-care center. Since the law is not duly enforced and has no deterrent effect in case of breach, this law does more harm than good to female workers. Employers with large enterprises have chosen not to employ women so as to keep away from the cost of providing child-care facilities (Dayıođlu, 2000). Another trick is to set up several small employing companies. This shows that the government policies and its implementations have had critical importance on the improvement of female employment both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Although the news about 'material assistance' instead of the mentioned Article 88 figured in the papers almost one year ago<sup>54</sup>; there has not been a

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<sup>53</sup> For Law No. 4857, Article 88, see: <http://www.aktifsmmm.com.tr/Is/kanun4857.htm>

<sup>54</sup> For instance, see: <http://www.memurlar.net/haber/100104/>

concrete attempt for this amendment yet. In spite of sounding positive at the first glance, material assistance means shifting all burden and responsibility of children on individuals in the long run. Furthermore, it will lead to a further commercialization of the child-care services, and consequently people with children may become bound to the increasing costs of the child-care enterprises. Furthermore, increasing costs may affect adversely the labor market choices, namely the decision to work.

**TABLE 7: The Distribution by the Status of Person Taking Care of Working Mother's Baby under 6 Ages, 2003 Percentage)**<sup>55</sup>

(%)	Mother herself	Husband	Elder Sister	Grandmother	Mother in law	Elder Brother	Other Relatives	Baby-sitter	Ins.Care Services
<b>Location</b>									
Urban	34.0	2.7	7.4	13.4	16.5	0.5	5.4	7.6	8.9
Rural	40.2	2.3	13.5	4.8	26.2	1.6	7.5	0.5	0.3
<b>Educational level</b>									
Illiterate	39.8	0.7	28.3	3.2	15.7	3.4	6.6	0.0	0.0
Primary School	44.4	3.1	7.3	8.9	24.4	0.3	7.2	0.7	0.3
Secondary School	43.7	7.7	1.5	9.1	21.2	1.6	7.2	0.0	4.0
High school and over	13.3	1.6	0.2	16.2	20.2	0.0	4.4	18.5	21.3
<b>Economic Activity</b>									
Agriculture	35.7	1.6	14.9	6.5	28.8	1.3	7.8	0.2	0.0
Non-Agriculture	38.2	3.1	7.2	10.9	16.0	0.9	5.5	6.7	7.9
<b>Continuity of Employment</b>									
Whole year	28.8	1.8	11.7	10.1	20.0	0.5	5.7	8.3	9.2
Seasonal	39.0	2.1	11.4	5.7	27.4	1.2	8.3	0.1	0.7
From time to time	58.3	5.4	4.3	12.9	11.0	2.3	4.7	0.3	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	37.1	2.5	10.4	9.0	21.3	1.1	6.5	4.0	4.6

Source: *General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women, Gender Disaggregated Statistics, 2004.*

<sup>55</sup> Translated by the author, P.K.

#### **2.3.4. Labor Force Participation by Educational Level**

Although the effect of the education on women's participation in the labour market in Turkey has figured, albeit usually under the subtitle of "development indicators", in the periodical country reports of the international institutions, such as the World Bank, The International Labour Organization, The United Nations, it has been a relatively little studied matter in the Turkish academic field; with the exception of few leading analyses by Kasnakoğlu and Dayıoğlu (1997), Dayıoğlu (2000), Tansel (2002b), Selim and İlkcaracan (2002).

All mentioned authors point out the significance of the education as the most effective way of improving the probability of women's participation in the labour market. The importance of the education on women's participation is an unquestionable reality. There is, however, an important point to be mentioned in order to complete this argument. That is the fact that the gap in labor force participation rates between genders seems to be significantly reduced only at the university level (See: Table 8 and Figure 6). The participation rates of women at the educational levels below the university degree remain considerably low (See: Figure 6).



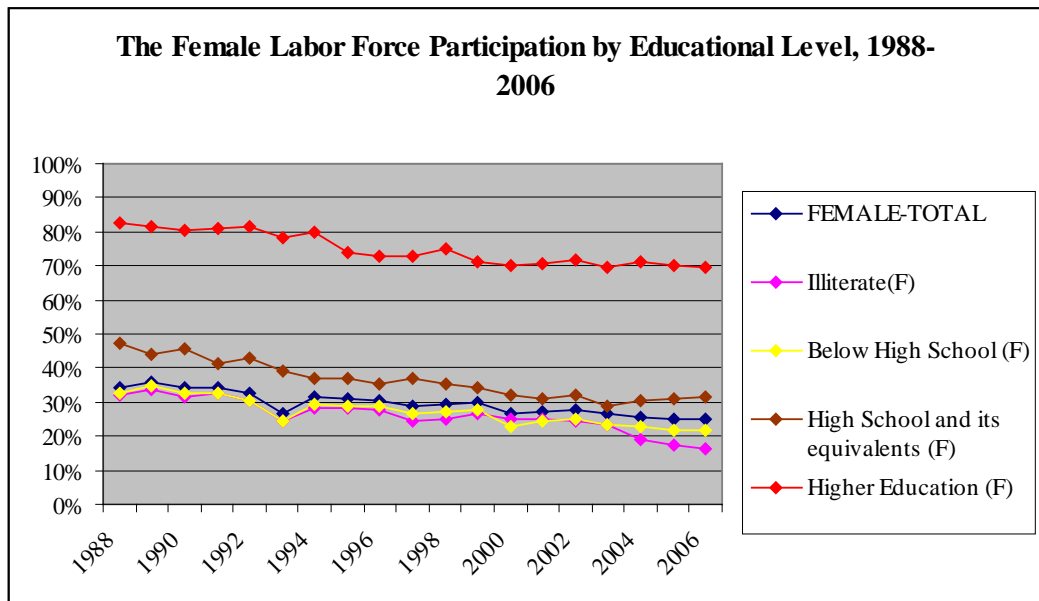
**TABLE 8: The Labor Force Participation Rates by Educational Level and Urban-Rural Area Distinction, 2007 (Percentage)**

	Total	Urban	Rural
<b>Turkey (total)</b>	47.7	45.5	51.8
Illiterate	18.9	10.1	26.2
Less than high school	46.6	41.2	54.8
High and vocational high school	55.9	53.7	63.7
Higher education	78.3	77.7	81.5
<b>Female</b>			
	24.4	19.9	32.0
Illiterate	15.3	5.9	23.7
Less than high school	20.9	12.7	34.0
High and vocational high school	31.2	30.3	35.1
Higher education	69.6	69.3	71.6
<b>Male</b>			
	71.6	71.1	72.7
Illiterate	36.3	34.2	37.7
Less than high school	71.5	70.1	73.7
High and vocational high school	72.6	70.6	78.8
Higher education	83.6	83.2	86.1

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007.*

As discussed before, the female labor force participation has been decreasing over the years. In Figure 6, this decreasing trend of the female labor force participation is presented in the context of the educational levels between the years 1988-2006. The labor force participation rates of women at all levels of education seems to be decreasing, and the rates for female university graduates are not exception. This shows the significance of including the factors apart from the educational level that influence women's participation in the labor force.

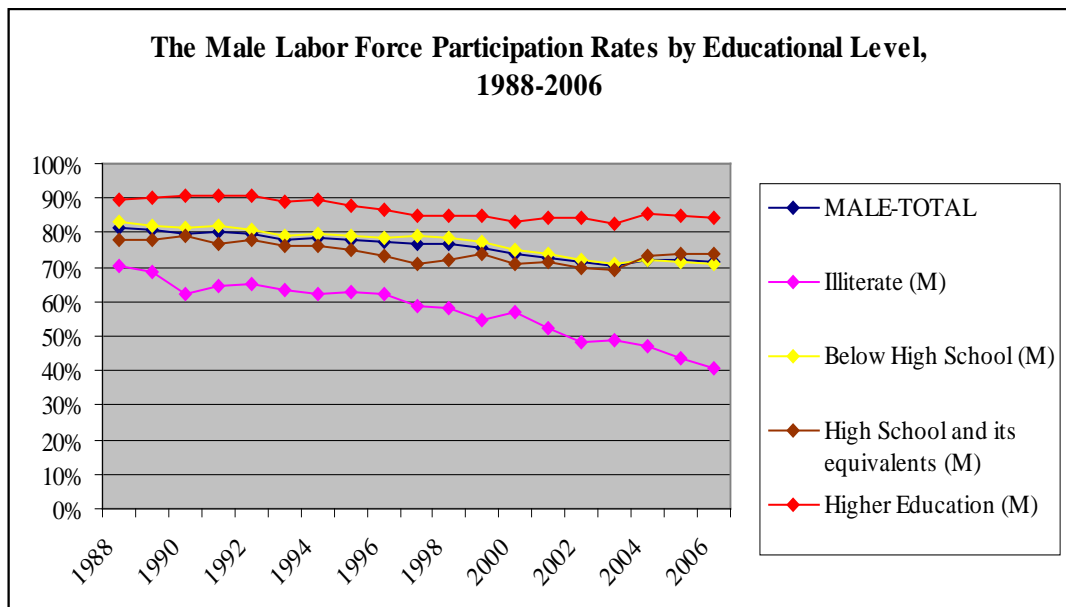
**FIGURE 6:**



Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, 1988-2006.

For men, on the other hand, the participation rates are quite high and close to one another for all educational levels except the category of the illiterate. This means that contrary to the female participation, the improvement of the labor force participation thanks to the education can be observed for men at all levels of education (See: Figure 7 and Table 8).

**FIGURE 7:**



Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, 1988-2006.

The argument of the mentioned studies is also incomplete in terms of the difference of the agricultural and non-agricultural production. The higher educational level enhances the possibility of women's employment in the non-agricultural production. In the agricultural production, where the experience matters more than the educational level, however, as the educational level improves, the participation rates are significantly decreasing (See: Table 9).

**TABLE 9: The Female Labor Force Participation by Economic Activity and Educational Level, 2006 (Percentage)**

	Agriculture	Non-Agriculture
Illiterate	14.4	1.7
Below High School	12.8	8.6
High School and its equivalents	2.2	26.3
Higher Education	0.8	64.9

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, 2006.*

The closing participation gap at the university level is admittedly a gratifying improvement. However, the matter of in which fields of study women are mainly enrolled and the kind of tasks that women undertake in the labor market are as important as the improving participation rates. In Table 10, the distribution of 2006-07 academic year graduates by their fields of study is presented.

The female graduates major mostly in the fields of Languages and Literature, Health Sciences, Art, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, and Education. The male graduates, in contrast, seem to be dominated in more technical fields of study.

In the field of Health Sciences, the subfield of 'Nursing' is the most important factor that increases the share of female graduates. Another significant point to be remarked is the coexistence of almost equal numbers of female and male graduates in Medicine, which has been traditionally known as a male-dominated discipline.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> The reader having doubts about whether or not Medicine is male-dominated should see: Dobson, R., *Women Doctors Believe Medicine is Male Dominated*, British Medicine Journal, Vol. 315, 1997, pp. 75-80. See also: Ash, A.S., Carr, P.L., Goldstein, R., and Friedman, R.H., *Compensation and Advancement of Women in Academic Medicine: Is There Equity?*, Annals of Internal Medicine, Vol. 141, No. 3, 2004, pp. 205-212. See: Allen, I., *Women Doctors and Their*

**TABLE 10: The Distribution of 2006-07 Academic Year Graduates by Fields of Study (Percentage)<sup>57</sup>**

	Total	Female		Male	
		total	share	total	share
<i>Total Number of University Grad.</i>	160560	76465	47.6%	84095	52.4%
<b>Language and Literature</b>	6756	4656	68.9%	2100	31.1%
<b>Mathematics and Natural Sciences</b>	15064	7717	51.2%	7347	48.8%
<b>Health Sciences</b>	14231	9046	63.6%	5185	36.4%
Medicine	4737	2084	44.0%	2653	56.0%
Dentistry	981	527	53.7%	454	46.3%
Pharmacy	981	560	57.1%	421	42.9%
Nursing	5157	5091	98.7%	66	1.3%
<b>Social Sciences</b>	15103	7691	50.9%	7412	49.1%
<b>Applied Social Sciences</b>	76784	37755	49.2%	39029	50.8%
Law	4020	2046	50.9%	1974	49.1%
<b>Education</b>	48884	24602	50.3%	24282	49.7%
Technical Education	6318	1059	16.8%	5259	83.2%
Education in Foreign Language	3462	2615	75.5%	847	24.5%
Vocational Education	1866	1411	75.6%	455	24.4%
Preschool Education	2367	2199	92.9%	168	7.1%
<b>Technical Sciences</b>	25214	6506	25.8%	18708	74.2%
Aircraft Engineering	153	10	6.5%	143	93.5%
Mechanical Engineering	3875	288	7.4%	3587	92.6%
Civil Engineering	2972	356	12.0%	2616	88.0%
Mining Engineering	727	112	15.4%	615	84.6%
Computer Engineering	2174	508	23.4%	1666	76.6%
Geology Engineering	1115	396	35.5%	719	64.5%
Industrial Engineering	2049	778	38.0%	1271	62.0%
Environment Engineering	1100	534	48.5%	566	51.5%
Textile Engineering	647	326	50.4%	321	49.6%
Chemical Engineering	1319	699	53.0%	620	47.0%
Food Engineering	737	404	54.8%	333	45.2%
<b>Agriculture and Forestry</b>	4623	1586	34.3%	3037	65.7%
<b>Art</b>	2785	1508	54.1%	1277	45.9%
<b>Applied Arts</b>	613	356	58.1%	257	41.9%
<b>Music</b>	524	239	45.6%	285	54.4%

*Source: OSYM, Higher Education Statistics for the 2007-08 Academic Year, 2008, Table 13.*

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*Careers: What Now?*, British Medicine Journal, Vol. 331, 2005, pp. 569-572. See: Ward, L., *Female Faculty in Male Dominated Fields: Law, Medicine, and Engineering*, New Directions for Higher Education, No. 143, 2008, pp. 63-72.

<sup>57</sup> This is a select portion of the original table of the OSYM statistics. Here, the fields of study that draw most attention in terms of the gender gap are included by the author, P.K.

However, when the distribution of the graduates by the areas of specialization in Medicine is investigated, the gender stratification in this discipline is confirmed (See: OSYM, Higher Education Statistics for the 2007-08 Academic Year, 2008, Table 23).<sup>58</sup>

According to the OSYM statistics, women, who received their specialist degree in Medicine in 2006-07 academic year, seem to prefer mostly the areas of Dermatology (91.7%), Thoracic Diseases (76.5%), Psychiatry (59.2%), Child Health and Diseases (57.7%), Basic Medical Sciences<sup>59</sup> (55 %), Public Health (52.6%), and Internal Medicine (36.2%).<sup>60</sup> Another significant point to be realized by examining the statistics is the low participation of women in the all sub-disciplines of Surgery, which has evoked most attention and respect in both academic circles and public life.

It is acknowledged for Turkey that female medical graduates mainly prefer the specialization areas, where the on call duties and night shifts are relatively rare, flexible working hours are available, the re-entry after taking time off is more practicable in terms of professional adjustment, in order to provide the compatibility with family responsibilities.<sup>61</sup> Kuzuca Genç (2007), in her pioneering study titled *Gender Approaches in the Field of Medical Speciality and Academic Life in Turkey*, argues for the influences of the gender roles on the preferences of medicine students, graduates and on their further professional lives. She concludes that;

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<sup>58</sup> The OSYM Higher Education Statistics for the 2007-08 Academic Year is available at the link below:

<http://www.osym.gov.tr/BelgeGoster.aspx?F6E10F8892433CFFF88F742D0D71125168BB5005A7961B47>

<sup>59</sup> Basic Medical Sciences consists of sub-disciplines of Biochemistry, Histology and Embryology, Microbiology, Anatomy, Physiology, Pharmacology, Medical Biology and Genetics, Biostatistics, Biophysics, Medical Ethics and History of Medicine, and Biochemistry and Clinical Biochemistry.

<sup>60</sup> The given percentage figures represents the shares of female graduates in the total graduates of each discipline.

<sup>61</sup> For a challenging research coming to the similar conclusions about the determinants of women's choice of specialty in Medicine in Australia, see: Harris, M.G., Gavel, P.H., and Young, J.R., *Factors Influencing the Choice of Specialty of Australian Medical Graduates*, MJA, Vol. 183, 2005, pp. 295-300.

When the gender distribution of the physicians according to the areas of specialization is investigated, that the female physicians and male physicians are distributed to certain areas of specialization and there is a sex discrimination in this sense...It is found that some areas of specialization consist of almost only male physicians. In the twelve of the twenty eight areas of specialization, which were investigated in this study, the rate of the female physicians is below 33%, the critical threshold. These areas consist of surgical areas apart from internal medicine and cardiology (Kuzuca Genç, 2007: 111).

In Social Sciences, although women dominate in the disciplines of Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology and Theology, one sees an even distribution of the graduates by sex in the aggregate due to the preponderant of male graduates in the fields of History, Geography, Archeology and Economics.

In Applied Social Sciences, an even distribution is observed in the aggregate, as well. The intriguing thing is that women account for 50.9% of the graduates from Law which is also known as a highly male-dominated discipline. However, according to the 2008 statistics of the Union of Turkish Bar Associations, female lawyers constitute 36.8% of the total lawyers registered in the Union.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, according to the Sixth Periodic Country Report (2008) prepared to be presented to the committee of the UN on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 28.9% of the judges, and 5.62% of the prosecutors were women according to the October 2007 numbers. This corresponds to a ratio of 20.27% of all judges and prosecutors; which is very low indeed.<sup>63</sup>

The field of Education gives interesting details concerning the gender stratification, as well. Female graduates account for two-thirds of the total

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<sup>62</sup> For the mentioned statistics, see: [http://www.barobirlik.org.tr/tbb/avukat\\_sayilari/2008.aspx](http://www.barobirlik.org.tr/tbb/avukat_sayilari/2008.aspx)

<sup>63</sup> For the mentioned Country Report, see: <http://www.ksgm.gov.tr/Pdf/cedawrapor6.doc>

graduates of the Foreign Languages and Vocational Education<sup>64</sup>, and for almost all of the graduates of Preschool Education.

Male graduates, on the other hand, major in Technical Education, and they constitute 83.2% of the total graduates.<sup>65</sup>

In Technical Sciences, every three graduates out of four seem to be male. If one examines the distribution of the graduates by the disciplines, the gender stratification shows itself more definitely. Female graduates are mainly dominated in the disciplines of Engineering such as Food, Chemical, Textile and Environment which “can be more easily associated with their traditional roles of ‘cooking’, ‘sewing’ and ‘arranging’ (Toksöz, 2007: 69). In more technical disciplines, namely Aircraft, Mechanical, Civil, Mining, and Computer, and Geology, however, the shares of female graduates are highly low.

The male dominance characteristic of Engineering has been valid world wide; including the European Union and the US. According to the study of the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) in the US, female engineers with a bachelor’s degree account for 19.4% of the total graduates of the discipline in 2006 (Freehill et. al., 2008: 6). According to the latest *She Figures 2006*:

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<sup>64</sup> Vocational Education is trained in Girls’ Vocational High Schools, and has a gender biased structure. Vocational Education consists of sub-branches of Teaching in Child Care and Development, Teaching in Family Economy and Nutrition, Teaching in Decorative Arts, Teaching in Embroidery, Teaching in Clothing, Teaching in Homemaking and Home Economics, Teaching in Accommodation, Teaching in Office Management, Teaching in Art Flower Making and Weaving, Teaching in Knitting, Hairdresser Training, Teaching in Handicrafts, Teaching in Ready-made Clothing, Teaching in Fashion Design, Teaching in Family and Consumer Sciences, Teaching in Management, Teaching in Accountancy and Finance, Teaching in Travel and Tourism Guiding, Teaching in Textiles Weaving and Knitting, Teaching in Marketing. Male graduates dominate, unsurprisingly, only in Teaching Training in Accountancy and Finance, and Teaching Training in Travel and Tourism Guiding.

<sup>65</sup> Technical Education is trained in Boys’ Vocational High Schools. It involves the sub-branches of Teaching in Computer and Learning Techniques, Teaching in Building Painter, Teaching in Electronics and Communications, Teaching in Metal Work, Teaching in Building Construction, Teaching in Furniture and Decoration, Teaching in Electronics, Teaching in Electrical Skills, Teaching in Foundry Work, Teaching in Pattern-Making, Teaching in Plumping, Teaching in Printing, Teaching in Modelling, Teaching in Mechanic Drawing and Construction, Teaching in Computer Technologies, Teaching in Industrial Technology, Teaching in Chip Wood Production, Teaching in Electronics, Teaching in Textiles, Teaching in Energy, Teaching in Automotive, Teaching in Design and Construction, Teaching in Electronic and Computer Studies, Teaching in Computer and Control Studies, Teaching in Mecotronic, Teaching in Ready-made Clothing, and Teaching in Building Design. Women, dominate, foreseeably, in Ready-made Clothing Training, Teaching Training in Textiles, and Teaching Training in Printing. This shows the gender biased structure of the training given in Vocational High Schools in Turkey.

*Women and Science Statistics and Indicators* by European Commission, in EU-25 countries, women constitute only 5.8% of those at the highest academic grade in Engineering and Technology in 2003 (European Commission, 2006).<sup>66</sup>

It is perceived that women participate rather in service and labor-intensive jobs than the high-tech ones. The gender stratification of fields of study indicates that women mainly undertake similar roles to those of traditional ones, and their preferences of field of study do not contradict the expected attitude from a woman in the society, for the sake of the compatibility with the responsibilities in the private sphere.

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<sup>66</sup> In Turkey, there is no official organization or such an association that brings female engineers together. However, there is the struggle of a group of female engineers, architects, city planners, scientists, and technical clerks to make their problems to be heard; visit the website of the owners of this struggle: [www.kadinmuhendisler.org](http://www.kadinmuhendisler.org)



## CHAPTER 3

### EMPLOYMENT

According to the Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations,

Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for *himself and his family* an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.<sup>67</sup>

Unfortunately, every person is not as lucky as the ‘idealized’ human being that is defined in the Declaration. The paradox between reality and idealism is perceptible in the very first sentence which refers to ‘full’ employment. Although the debate on full employment has dated from the times of David Ricardo and Karl Marx, it was not until the Great Depression that this debate of how to achieve full employment has become widespread and has found its place among the most controversial issues of the century. There have been two main approaches to the issue of full employment, namely the Keynesian and

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<sup>67</sup> Emphasis added by the author, P.K. This statement is built in gendering. For the full text of the Declaration, see: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml#ap>

mainstream theory.<sup>68</sup> John Maynard Keynes in his book entitled *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1936) challenged one of the basic assumptions of mainstream economics, namely *laissez-faire*, and argued that capitalism and its assumed market equilibrium would not result in full employment on their own, and suggested that “government intervention was required in order to jump-start the economy and help achieve and maintain full employment” (Kaboub, 2007: 2).<sup>69</sup>

By government interventions, increased aggregate demand would be achieved and thus real GDP would be increased, and this was expected to reduce cyclical and involuntary unemployment. Keynes defined ‘full’ employment as “a situation in which aggregate employment is inelastic in response to an increase in the effective demand for its output” (Keynes, 1936: 26); and therefore “we have full employment when output has risen to a level at which the marginal return from a representative unit of the factors of production has fallen to the minimum figure at which a quantity of the factors sufficient to produce this output is available” (Keynes, 1936: 303). According to him, the full employment level of unemployment could consist of frictional and voluntary unemployment.

Shortly after Keynes, Lord William Henry Beveridge in his book *Full Employment in a Free Society* (1944) gave his well-known definition of ‘full’ employment, which has “become the standard one through the fifties and sixties at the time in which full employment started to be considered to be the paramount responsibility of public policy ” (Etxezarreta, 1999: 3). He made his definition of full employment in the context of “what is meant by full

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<sup>68</sup> For more detailed information about this literature and the concept of ‘full employment’, see: Kaboub, F., *Employment Guarantee Programs: A Survey of Theories and Policy Experiences*, The Levy Economics Institute, Working Paper No. 498, 2007, pp. 1-23. See also: Etxezarreta, M., *About the Concept of Full Employment: A Limited Survey*, Prepared for European Economists for an Alternative Economic Policy in Europe, Barcelona, 1999, pp. 1-26. Available at the link below:

[http://www.memo-europe.uni-bremen.de/downloads/Etxezarreta\\_Employ.PDF](http://www.memo-europe.uni-bremen.de/downloads/Etxezarreta_Employ.PDF)

<sup>69</sup> In fact, the debate has been said to become prevalent after the release of Pigou’s book *Theory of Unemployment* in 1933. Keynes reviewed Pigou’s arguments about employment and unemployment in a separate chapter in his book *The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money* (See: Keynes, 1936: chp.19). See also: Pigou, A.C., *Theory of Unemployment*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, A.M. Kelley Publishing, New York, 1968.

employment and what is not meant by it” (Beveridge, 1953: 18); and argued that:

It [full employment] does not mean that every man and woman in the country who is fit and free for work is employed productively on every day of his or her working life...It [full employment] means having always more vacant jobs than unemployed men can reasonably be expected to take them; it means, by consequence, that the normal lag between losing one job and finding another will be very short” (Beveridge, 1953: 18).

On the other hand, the advocates of the mainstream approach, namely Edmund Phelps (1968) and Milton Friedman (1968) pointed out that government interventions and demand-side policy implementations of the Keynesian approach impaired price stability, and thus caused inflationary pressures on wages. According to this monetarist approach, the main determinant of employment is the wage rate; and there is a trade off between “the rate of change of money wage rates and the level of unemployment” (Zis, 1990: 145).<sup>70</sup> Phelps argued that “that kind of inflation can be stopped only by a reduction of the employment rate through lower aggregate demand” (Phelps, 1958: 681). Furthermore, Phelps and Friedman defined a ‘natural rate of unemployment’ and introduced it as a rate that “government policy is helpless to reduce” (Tobin, 1996: 36).

James Tobin<sup>71</sup>, the famous Keynesian economist, said that “Milton Friedman convinced the economic profession in 1968 that if monetary policy persistently attempts to bring unemployment below ‘the natural rate of unemployment’, it will only boost the inflation rate explosively. Friedman’s

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<sup>70</sup> This is the main argument of the Phillips’ curve. Samuelson and Solow (1960) gave Phillips’ arguments its well known downward sloping state (Romer, 2006). That is the existence of trade off between “different degrees of unemployment and price stability” (Romer, 2006: 520). For Phillips’ study in which he found the mentioned relation of unemployment and price stability; see: Phillips, A.W., *The Relation between Unemployment and the Rate of Change of Money Wage Rates in the United Kingdom: 1861-1957*, *Economica*, Vol. 25, 1958, pp. 283-299.

<sup>71</sup> He has been known as the first economist to use the term ‘non-accelerating inflation rate of unemployment (NAIRU)’ instead of ‘natural rate of unemployment’ to refer ‘full’ employment.

further conclusion that monetary policy should never concern itself with unemployment, production or other real variables has been very influential” (Tobin, 1996: 83).

As of the 1970s, governments have gave priority to supply-side policies, i.e. having labor markets more flexible, low wage strategies, and anti-inflationary policies etc., in order to keep prices stable rather than adopting a full employment strategy. As mentioned in the sub-chapter titled “General Review” in Turkey, as in most of the world, these supply-side policies have been adopted in the neo-liberalization process, and the employment creation problem has always been neglected in comparison to inflation problem. However, in the course of time, it has been seen that supply-side policies have failed in achieving their promises.

In all these years of negligence, the employment creation problem has become a gangrenous universal problem in a context both of social tension and economic circumstances, which can not be ignored anymore.<sup>72</sup> ILO defines ‘full’ employment as: “level of employment where all those available, able and actively seeking work, can obtain it”<sup>73</sup>; and further emphasizes that;

With global unemployment at historically high levels, there has never been a greater need to put employment at the centre of economic and social policies. Even among those who work, the extent of poverty

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<sup>72</sup> What can not be comprised is a full employment strategy that will not result in inflationary pressures. There is ‘The Employer of Last Resort’ (ELR) Theory which is influenced by Keynesian line of thought and based mainly on the studies of Abba Ptachya Lerner (1944; 1951), Hyman Minsky (1986), and Phillip Harvey (1989). According to this theory “government acts as the employer of last resort, hiring all the labor that can not find private sector employment [at a fixed wage]...In doing so, the government ensures that all who are ready, willing, and able to work at that wage will be provided with a job. At the same time, by setting this wage, government will provide a price anchor that will impart price stability to the system” (Wray, 1997: 6; ii). For a quick glance at this literature, see: Carlson, E., and Mitchell, W.F. (eds.), *The Path to Full Employment: 4th Path to Full Employment Conference and 9th National Conference on Unemployment*, Centre of Full Employment and Equity, The University of Newcastle, 2002. For a study about Argentina’s ELR experience that began in 2002 and its ongoing impacts, see: Tcherneva, P., and Wray, L.R., *Employer of Last Resort Program: A case Study of Argentina’s Jefes de Hogar Program*, Center for Full Employment and Price Stability, University of Missouri-Kansas City, Working Paper No. 41, 2005, pp. 1-26.

<sup>73</sup> See:

[http://www.ilo.org/global/About\\_the\\_ILO/Media\\_and\\_public\\_information/Press\\_releases/lang--en/WCMS\\_008063/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Media_and_public_information/Press_releases/lang--en/WCMS_008063/index.htm)

underscores the need for a far greater number of productive and decent jobs. The insufficient pace in creating decent work worldwide points to the need for greater international coordination of macro-economic policies, as well as active labour market policies at the national level.<sup>74</sup>

The promotion of full employment and decent work<sup>75</sup> without leading to occupational or sectoral gender segregation is a fundamental step for all, women in the first place, to improve their economic conditions and quality of life, and eventually to have a more even distribution of economic resources.

In Turkey, a large number of women work as unpaid family workers without any social security or pay in rural areas, whereas the majority of women workers in urban areas are employed in insecure jobs, and over-represented in informal sector that expands gradually due to poor employment creation. Furthermore, in Turkey, as mentioned before, discouraged worker effect has substantial negative effects on women's decisions to work. Therefore examining composition of current employment by gender is also of great importance to obtain an opinion of the extent of gender segregation. In this context, this chapter begins with an overview of employment in contemporary Turkey and then presents three other sub-sections that are titled 'Distribution of Employment by Economic Activity', 'Distribution of Employment by Occupational Categories', and 'Employment by Status', respectively.

In the first sub-section, sectoral distribution of employment by gender is represented, and gender aggregation in sectoral composition of labor force is discussed. The fact that employment creation in non-agricultural sector is inadequate to compensate the decline in agricultural employment is emphasized. It is argued that despite the ongoing decline in agricultural employment, female employment is still concentrated in the agricultural sector, whereas, in non-

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<sup>74</sup> See:

[http://www.ilo.org/global/About\\_the\\_ILO/Mainpillars/Employmentcreation/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/About_the_ILO/Mainpillars/Employmentcreation/lang--en/index.htm)

<sup>75</sup> According to the definition of ILO, decent work is "that gives people the opportunity to earn enough for themselves and their families to escape poverty, not just temporarily but permanently. But the concept is not limited to the income component. A decent job provides social security and ensures protection by labour laws, and a voice at work through freely chosen workers' organizations. It gives the job a human face and makes sure that people can work in dignity and freedom" (Schmidt, 2007: 4).

agricultural sector, the majority of female workers are employed in service sector, namely in sub-sectors of ‘community, social and personal services’ and ‘wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants’, regardless of their educational level.

In the following sub-section, gender discrimination in promotion is demonstrated by means of paying close attention to lower participation of women in senior managerial staff compared to men’s, irrespective of their educational level. It is seen that this phenomenon is also valid for public sector where is said to occur less gender discrimination. Even the share of women with university degree in senior managerial occupations stays considerably lower than men’s, which indicates gender discrimination in the promotion process. Furthermore, women have to be more highly educated than men for the same positions. By contrast, it is seen that men can be employed in various occupational positions, at any level of education. The occupational distribution of women, however, is highly concentrated in particular positions, depending on their educational level.

The last sub-section of this chapter, deals with examining the status of female and male employees. Our basic aim is to direct the reader’s attention to the precarious circumstances that are experienced by workers, women in the first place. Status in employment is of significant importance, since it gives clues about under what kind of circumstances workers are employed, namely whether they have formal work arrangements, the type of their work contracts and to what extent they are able to benefit from social security, and how many of them are employed under precarious circumstances. It is seen that the most vulnerable group consists of agricultural workers majority of which is formed by female unpaid family workers. In agricultural sector, three out of every four women are employed as unpaid family workers who lack any formal work contracts, remuneration or social security coverage. Furthermore, on the whole, when we calculate vulnerable employment for women according to the definition of ILO, we see that one of every two women is vulnerably employed.

It is also acknowledged that government sector has lost not only its enterprising and pioneering character in production but also its character as an employer in Turkey. Only one in every ten employees is employed in public

sector, and this is valid for both sexes. And one in every two female workers in private sector is employed as ‘field crop worker’, while the majority of male workers in the same sector works as ‘regular’ employees.

### **3.1. An Overview**

The employment rate represents “the ratio of employed persons to the non-institutional working age population” (TURKSTAT, 2007: 155).

In Turkey, the employment rate continues to be low. The rate of growth in employment falls behind the rate of increase in working age population. Throughout the period of 1990-2007, total employment improved from 19.030.000 to 22.750.000, i.e., by 3.720.000, while the working age population increased from 35.711.000 to 52.796.000, i.e., by 17.058.000. This means that, in 2007, only 43.1% of the working age population could be employed. This low rate of employment rate indicates not only increasing unemployment; but also decreasing labor force participation.

Employment in Turkey also seems to be low compared to the international data. While the total employment rate in the EU-27 was 65.4% in 2007, it was 43.1% in Turkey and 61.7% for all over the world.<sup>76</sup> This low figure of employment is mainly accounted for by the low level of the total female employment rate. The total world employment rate for females was 49.1 % in 2007 compared to the male employment rate of 74.3% (ILO, 2008: 2). Female employment rate was 21.7% for Turkey, while it was 58.3% for the EU-27 in 2007. In Turkey, approximately 34 women were employed for every 100 men according to the October 2007 statistics, while, for the same period, around 70 women were employed for every 100 men at the global level according to the ILO statistics (ILO, 2008: 1).<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> The reason for comparison is that the Developed Economies and European Union have represented the smallest gender gap worldwide.

<sup>77</sup> Despite this fact, one should keep in mind that part time employment accounts for 18.2% of the total employment in the EU-27 area, while accounting for 8.8% of the total employment in Turkey in 2007. For the statistics related to EU-27, See: the EUROSTAT Labor Force Survey for 2007:

While the Turkish population growth rates have started to diminish since 1985, the working age population displays a growing trend. This phenomenon exerts a substantial pressure on labor markets. For instance, over the 2000-2005 period, the working age population increased by nearly 1.9% while the average annual growth rate of GDP was 4.4%. In the mentioned period, however, the rate of annual employment growth remained at 0.4% (Toksöz, 2007).

Between the years 1990-2007, the number of employed women in Turkey jumped from 1.333.000 to 5.780.000. But, the number of unemployed women also grew from 349.000 to 717.000 over the same period; and women have still a higher likelihood of being unemployed than men. This is set out in the following table. When the issue is non-agricultural unemployment rates, the gender gap expanded. The females in urban areas seem to represent the group in the worst condition with regard to the unemployment rates.

**TABLE 11: Unemployment Rates, 2007 (Percentage)**

	Total	Female	Male
Unemployment Rate	9.9	11	9.3
Non-agricultural unemployment rate	12.3	18.6	10.7
<b>URBAN</b>			
Unemployment Rate	11.8	17.1	10.3
Non-agricultural unemployment rate	12.1	18.3	10.4
<b>RURAL</b>			
Unemployment Rate	6.6	4.4	7.6
Non-agricultural unemployment rate	12.8	19.9	11.6

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007.*

Economic growth has not generated adequate employment. For the period 1996-2006, the average annual real growth rate was 4.1% with a poor increase of 1.6% in the employment rate. Economic growth has mainly been obtained by increase in productivity derived mainly from longer working hours

[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PGP\\_PRD\\_CAT\\_PREREL/PGE\\_CAT\\_P\\_REREL\\_YEAR\\_2008/PGE\\_CAT\\_PREREL\\_YEAR\\_2008\\_MONTH\\_07/3-22072008-EN-AP.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/PGP_PRD_CAT_PREREL/PGE_CAT_P_REREL_YEAR_2008/PGE_CAT_PREREL_YEAR_2008_MONTH_07/3-22072008-EN-AP.PDF)

For Turkey, see: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007. For the total world statistics see: (ILO, 2008: 24).



rather than employment (Toksöz, 2007: 8). For instance, in the post-liberalization period, while increase in productivity per worker in manufacturing industry was perceived, no significant increase in employment in numbers was experienced (Toksöz, 2007; Boratav et al, 2000: 11-14).<sup>78</sup>

The phenomenon of growth without employment has been associated with the “tightness” of labor market regulations by the mainstream agencies. The following lines are from The World Bank report titled *Turkey Labour Market Study* (2006):

Why did employment in Turkey grow slowly relative to GDP from 1981 to 2003...Three factors are worth noting. The first is structural change in the economy as the population has been shifting out of low-productivity agriculture. The second is the changing relationship between productivity and employment within sectors. The third are labor market regulations and institutions...The job creation performance [of Turkey] reflects the impact of labor market regulations that reduce the incentives to hire new workers...Turkey has relied upon strong labor regulations to protect workers from unemployment and other labor market risks...The 2003 Labor Code introduced modifications in a number of areas, but did not alter this fundamental observation...Labor market regulations can be made more flexible, thereby encouraging job growth (The World Bank, 2006: v, 16, 99).

Flexible market system does not necessarily lead to job growth; on the contrary it worsens working conditions. Export-led growth strategies did not result in rewarding increases in employment, especially in sectors where women have been mostly employed. This failure accompanied with shrinking employment in agriculture, urged many workers to transfer from the non-agricultural labor force to informal employment as own account workers or family enterprises (Ansal et al., 2000).

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<sup>78</sup> This is the dirty little secret of increased productivity indeed. It causes employment to need fewer workers.

### **3.2. Distribution of Employment by Economic Activity**

While examining the Table 12 concerning the distribution of employed persons by economic activity, one sees that the service sector is the biggest employer among the sectors. 47.7% of the total employees were employed in the service sector. There is an exponential increase in the number of people being employed in this sector.

The service sector seems to be the only sector that shows substantial increase in employment and absorbs a considerable part of increasing labor force. The service sector, indeed, seems to be the major employer of both females and males for the entire world. 46.3% of the total employed women in the world were employed in the services sector in 2007, while the share of the female employment in agriculture was 36.1%. For the same year, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia have been the regions where the share of employment of women in agriculture exceeds the half of the total with shares of 67.9% and 60.5 %, respectively. In the ‘developed’ countries and EU, the share of the female employment in service sector (84.3%) has been the highest all over the world, the nearest share to that (74.8%) belongs to the Latin America and the Caribbean (For the data, see: ILO, 2008: 26).

Non-agricultural jobs in Turkey have been created mainly in the service sector. Substantial increases in female employment have been observed in again the service sector.

Although the share of the services sector has been increasing substantially since the 1970s, the sub-sectors where women have been employed do not display a radical change. In the services sector, ‘community, social and personal services’ and ‘wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants’ sectors, have been the main sub-sectors where female workers have mostly been employed, no matter what their educational level were. In 2006, 51.4% and 32% of the total female employment in the services sector were involved in these two mentioned sub-sectors respectively. On the other hand, these two sub-sectors have also been the last economic activity of the vast majority of the

unemployed females in the services sector. In 2006, there were 267,000 unemployed females in the services sector, of which 44.9% were employed in 'wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants' sector and 36% were in 'community, social and personal services' sector before being out of work.

There were 917,000 female university graduates, and they constituted 33.1% of the total university graduate employees in the year 2006. This means that one out of every three employees with a university degree was female. The overall unemployment rate for the female university graduates was 16.1% in the same year. The female unemployment rate for university graduates in agricultural sector, which was 16.7%, was slightly higher than the overall unemployment rate for the same group, while the same rate for the industry sector was 13.9%, and 6.6% for the services sector. Manufacturing, again, was the main subsector in the industry, where the unemployed female graduates were mostly found. 85.7% of the unemployed female graduates in the industry sector, that was 12,000 out of 14,000 unemployed persons in numbers, had been employed in the manufacturing sector. There were 58,000 unemployed female graduates in the services sector, of which 26,000 persons (44.8%) were in 'community, social and personal services' sector, 17,000 persons (29.3%) were in 'wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants' sector, and 11,000 persons (19%) were involved in 'finance, insurance, real estate and business services' sector, and the remaining 4,000 persons (6.9%) were in 'transportation, communication and storage' sector. Women still seems to be employed in the same subsectors, which are mostly considered by society as relevant to the routine duties that fit women well, regardless of their educational levels.

Female employment in industry sector, on the other hand, has poorly improved compared to increases in service sector. It should be noted that this very poor level of female employment in Turkey is not only due to the limited job creation. Gender roles influenced by cultural and social values have had substantial effects on determining the forms of female employment and occupations considered as "appropriate" for women.

**TABLE 12: The Distribution of Employed Persons by Economic Activity, (1990-2007) (Thousand; Percentage)<sup>79</sup>**

	Total employment			Female			Male		
	1990	2000	2007	1990	2000	2007	1990	2000	2007
<i>Total</i>	19030	21580	22750	5901	5800	5780	13129	15780	16970
Agriculture	8735	7769	5884	4428	3508	2728	4306	4261	3156
Share (%)	45.9	36.0	25.9	75.0	60.5	47.2	32.8	27.0	18.6
Industry	3958	5174	6021	576	763	860	3384	4411	5161
Share (%)	20.8	24.0	26.5	9.8	13.2	14.9	25.8	28.0	30.4
Services	6337	8637	10843	898	1529	2191	5438	7108	8653
Share (%)	33.3	40.0	47.7	15.2	26.4	37.9	41.4	45.0	51.0

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 1990, 2000, October 2007*

Looking at the data concerning 1990-2007, the situation became more obvious (See: Table 12). Within those years, agricultural employment in Turkey has rapidly diminished in both numbers and share without any sufficient compensatory increase in non-agricultural employment. The decrease of female employment in agriculture sector accounted for 1.700.000 persons in the same period. The increase in female employment for the same period being 284.000 and 1.293.000 in industry and service, respectively, has not been enough to balance out the shrink in female employment in agriculture.<sup>80</sup>

While 8.735.000 persons were being employed in the agricultural activities in 1990, it declined to 5.884.000 persons in the October 2007. This means that the agricultural employment accounted for 45.9% of the total employment, shrunk to 25.9% of the total within this period (See: Table 12). The decrease in agricultural employment has been seen as a “positive” improvement by employing class and poor “productivity” has been shown as the main reason for counting this employment declines as an affirmative event. In

<sup>79</sup> The Agricultural Sector consists of the sub-sectors of ‘Agriculture’; ‘Forestry’; ‘Hunting’; and ‘Fishing’. The Industrial Sector consists of the sub-sectors of ‘Mining and quarrying’; ‘Manufacturing’; ‘Electricity, gas and water supply’; and ‘Construction’. The Service Sector consists of the sub-sectors of ‘Wholesale and retail trade , hotels and restaurants’; ‘Transportation’; ‘Communication and storage’; ‘Financial intermediation ,real estate, rental and business services’; and ‘Community services, social and personal activities’. See: [http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/MetaVeri.do?tb\\_id=25andust\\_id=8](http://www.turkstat.gov.tr/MetaVeri.do?tb_id=25andust_id=8)

<sup>80</sup> In the period 1980-2007, the total female employment dropped by 390.000. While employment in agriculture shrank by 2.606.176 in the mentioned period, rise in industry and services, which were by 570.875 and 1.644.091 respectively, could not compensate the fall in agricultural employment.

spite of experiencing heavy and rapid decreases in the employment both in numbers and share since 1989, agricultural employment still continues to be high, at least as high as the industrial employment.

### 3.3. Distribution of Employment by Occupational Categories

The employment by occupational categories displays the presence of gender discrimination in the labor market (See: Table 13). The category of agricultural works is at the top of the list for male employees while the remaining occupation categories seem to be ranged on equal terms.

**TABLE 13: Employment by Occupational Categories, 2007 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Female		Male	
	total	share	total	share
Legislators, senior officials, managers	163	2.8	1983	8.7
Professionals	461	8.0	1287	5.7
Technicians and associate professionals	418	7.2	1445	6.4
Clerks	565	9.8	1356	6.0
Service workers, shop and market sales workers	549	9.5	2742	12.1
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	2080	36.0	4814	21.2
Craft and related trade workers	264	4.6	3300	14.5
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	239	4.1	2411	10.6
Elementary occupations	1042	18.0	3413	15.0
TOTAL	5780	100.0	22750	100.0

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007.*

Unsurprisingly, women are employed mostly in agricultural works such as crop farming, gathering and stock breeding according to the October 2007 statistics. The following larger occupational category for female employees is “elementary occupations” which involve unqualified works in manufacturing industry and services. Another significant point related to the occupational differences is the poor representation of women in senior managerial staff. The same category makes up for 1.983.000 of the total male employees with a share of 8.7%. Obvious under-employment of women in top management positions

indicates the difficulties and discriminations faced by women in promotion process.

Furthermore, the comparison of the distribution of the occupational categories by educational levels between male and female employees indicates that gender segregation during the course of employment promotion is irrespective of the educational level of the employees (See: Table-14).<sup>81</sup>

Female employees with a degree of education less than high school are concentrated in blue collar jobs, namely in skilled agricultural and fishery works. For male employees, the majority in blue collar jobs is observed only at the illiterate level, and the distribution of male employees among blue collar jobs shows a more even structure than that of females in blue collar jobs. In other words, women have to be more highly educated than men for the same type of position.

Female employees who have graduated from high school or equivalent schools concentrate mainly in clerical, service and sales works in white collar employment, whilst males with same educational level major in service and sales works, legislation and management.

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<sup>81</sup> According to the well known aggregative distinction of occupations, the category of 'white collar' workers includes the first five categories given in Table-14, namely legislators, senior officials and managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals, clerks, and service workers, shop and market sales workers, whereas the latter category of 'blue collar' workers includes the remaining occupation categories except elementary occupations, namely skilled agricultural and fishery workers, craft and related trade workers, and plant and machine operators and assemblers (Oberai, 1981: 24). In its simplest manner, the main criteria of the distinction between the 'white' and 'blue' collar worker, are type of work and educational level. The former holds office works, whilst the latter uses his/her manual labor at work. Furthermore, white-collar jobs are mainly said to require a higher degree of education, namely a university degree. In fact, the dichotomy of 'white' and 'blue' collar refers to socio-economic differences in its broadest sense. See an interesting book that includes the self-experiences of the author and some interviews about class-conflict and contradictions that have been experienced by those who have a blue-collar family background and have become white collar middle class persons in their later lives: Lubrano, A., *Limbo: Blue Collar Roots, White Collar Dreams*, John Wiley and Sons Publishing, 2003. In recent years the discussion of that globalization has weakened the white and blue collar dichotomy has been raised. In his paper titled "What Color is Your Collar?", Buchholz argues for this weakening dichotomy for the US situation: "Globalization and technology have made the workplace less secure for everybody and fuzzed up the line separating white and blue collars. ...the old-fashioned distinction between blue collar and white has been lost in an economy that demands ever-stronger skills and active brain cells. In the 1950s (and into the 1960s) a stumblebum in a gray flannel suit with a bachelor's degree had a good chance of receiving a high, stable income complete with suburban house and a manageable mortgage...But these days carrying around your college diploma doesn't entitle you to much. For one thing, a college degree is a cheapened currency. In 1950, only 6% of the population had one, compared with 28% today" (Buchholz, 2005: 1, 2).

Women employees, who have a university degree, are highly concentrated in white collar employment. They are mainly employed as professionals, technicians and associate professionals. Male employees with the same educational degree are mostly employed as professionals, legislators, senior officials, and managers. It is obvious that even women with university degree are less likely to be employed as legislators, senior officials, and managers than men with similar educational background are. On the contrary, males with an educational degree less than high school, account for 49.1% of all female and male legislators, senior officials, and managers in 2006.

It can be seen from Table 14 that the structure of the occupational distribution differs due to the improvement in educational level for women. However, males, regardless of their educational background, may have the chance of employment in various occupations. It can be said that education is important for women due to its improving influence on the employability of women in white collar jobs. However, it is an incomplete argument. This argument is inadequate to understand the real reasons for the obvious gender segregation in promotion process. Without questioning why the educational level is not a 'sine qua non' for men, the answer to which lies firstly in social norms and biases, we will not be able to ensure permanent gender equality.

**TABLE 14: Employment by Occupational Categories and Educational Level, 2006 (Thousand; Percentage)**

<b>FEMALE</b>	Illiterate		Below High School		High School and its equivalents		Higher Education	
	total	share	total	share	total	share	total	share
Legislators, senior officials, managers	2	0.2%	47	1.5%	40	4.4%	69	7.5%
Professionals	0	0.0%	10	0.3%	55	6.1%	447	48.7%
Technicians and associate professionals	1	0.1%	50	1.6%	160	17.7%	197	21.5%
Clerks	0	-	66	2.1%	279	30.8%	154	16.8%
Service workers, market sales workers	13	1.6%	272	8.6%	166	18.3%	31	3.4%
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	608	74.4%	1582	49.9%	61	6.7%	6	0.7%
Craft and related trade workers	24	2.9%	255	8.0%	49	5.4%	5	0.5%
Plant; machine operators, assemblers	6	0.7%	178	5.6%	39	4.3%	3	0.3%
Elementary occupations	163	20.0%	711	22.4%	57	6.3%	6	0.7%
<i>Total</i>	817	100.0%	3171	100.0%	906	100.0%	917	100.0%
<b>MALE</b>								
Legislators, senior officials, managers	13	3.5%	996	9.5%	502	13.4%	357	19.2%
Professionals	1	0.3%	31	0.3%	173	4.6%	755	40.7%
Technicians and associate professionals	2	0.5%	271	2.6%	390	10.4%	252	13.6%
Clerks	1	0.3%	211	2.0%	429	11.4%	182	9.8%
Service workers, market sales workers	13	3.5%	1209	11.5%	684	18.2%	148	8.0%
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	203	54.7%	2361	22.4%	253	6.7%	38	2.0%
Craft and related trade workers	30	8.1%	2196	20.9%	546	14.5%	71	3.8%
Plant; machine operators, assemblers	9	2.4%	1604	15.2%	464	12.3%	37	2.0%
Elementary occupations	100	27.0%	1651	15.7%	320	8.5%	17	0.9%
<i>Total</i>	371	100.0%	10532	100.0%	3759	100.0%	1857	100.0%

Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, 2006.



There is Table 15 related to distribution of significant management positions in public sector by title and gender below. In the total, only one in every five middle and top management positions is filled by a woman in the public sector.

**TABLE 15: The Distribution of the Middle and Top Management in Public Sector by Title, 2003** <sup>82</sup>

<i>TITLES</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Female %</i>	<i>F/M</i>
Undersecretary	0	21	21	0	-
Assistant Undersecretary	5	90	95	5.3	5.6
Chairman*	10	47	57	17.5	21.3
Vice Chairman	10	59	69	14.5	16.9
General Manager**	12	154	166	7.2	7.8
Vice General Manager***	63	408	471	13.4	15.4
Head of Department	300	1316	1616	18.6	22.8
Vice Head of Department	28	277	305	9.2	10.1
Director of Agency	2101	11700	13801	15.2	18.0
Regional Director	45	774	819	5.5	5.8
Vice Regional Director	56	1253	1309	4.3	4.5
Provincial Director	77	2986	3063	2.5	2.6
Vice Provincial Director	180	2007	2187	8.2	9.0
Director (other)	1209	10490	11699	10.3	11.5
Vice Director (other)	1067	4024	5091	21.0	26.5
Chief	8395	16465	24860	33.8	51.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13558</b>	<b>52071</b>	<b>65629</b>	<b>20.7</b>	<b>26.0</b>

*Source: General Directorate on the Status of Women, Gender Disaggregated Statistics, 2003.*

*\*: Chairmen of Institutions and Supreme Council*

*\*\* : General Managers of State Owned Economic Enterprises (KITs) not included*

*\*\*\*: Vice General Managers of State Owned Economic Enterprises (KITs) not included*

<sup>82</sup> Translated by P.K and there is no available data since 2003.

### 3.4. Employment by Status

In Turkey, employment statuses are categorized as regular and casual employee, employer, own account and unpaid family workers by TURKSTAT. This categorization of employed persons is used according to the 'International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93)' of the ILO;

The ICSE-93 consists of the following groups: employees; employers; own-account workers; members of producers' cooperatives; contributing family workers; workers not classifiable by status...It is recommended that countries, as far as possible, design their data collection and processing procedures so that they will be able to give estimates for those of categories are nationally significant...[ICSE-93 consists of the following groups of] **Employees**, who get a basic remuneration not directly dependent the revenue of the employer - among whom countries may need and be able to distinguish 'employees with stable contracts' (including regular employees), **Employers**, who hold self-employment jobs (i.e. whose remuneration depends directly on the [expectation of] profits derived from the goods and services produced) and engage one or more person to work for them as 'employees', on a continuous basis; **Own-account workers**, who hold self-employment jobs and do not engage 'employees' on a continuous basis; **Contributing family workers**, who hold self-employment jobs in an establishment operated by a related person, with a too limited degree of involvement in its operation to be considered a partner...**Casual workers** are workers who have an explicit or implicit contract of employment which is not expected to continue for more than a short period, whose duration is to be determined by national circumstances...**Regular employees** are

those ‘employees with stable contracts’ for whom the employing organization is responsible for payment of relevant taxes and social security contributions and/or where the contractual relationship is subject to national labour legislation.<sup>83</sup>

According to the October 2007 statistics, regular employees formed the largest group of the total employment in Turkey. (See: Table 16). The second largest group was self employed workers and it was followed by unpaid family workers. Having the category of the unpaid family workers as the last one, the order of the employment status for males was not so different from the total distribution. The status of “employer” had the smallest share in female employment while the category of unpaid family workers represented the smallest group in male employment.

**TABLE 16: Employment by Status, 2007 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Turkey		Female		Male	
	total	share	total	share	total	share
TOTAL	22750	100.0	5780	100.0	16970	100.0
Regular Employee	11683	51.4	2499	43.2	9184	54.1
Casual Employee	1733	7.6	333	5.8	1400	8.2
Employer	1330	5.8	92	1.6	1237	7.3
Own account worker	4851	21.3	630	10.9	4221	24.9
U.family worker	3154	13.9	2226	38.5	928	5.5

Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007.

While examining Table 17 related to female employment status in agricultural and non-agricultural activities, it is acknowledged that three in every four women working in agricultural sector work as unpaid family workers.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup>For the definitions, See the following links from the website of the ILO:

[http://www.ilo.org/global/What\\_we\\_do/Statistics/topics/Statusinemployment/guidelines/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/topics/Statusinemployment/guidelines/lang--en/index.htm)

See also:

[http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/---stat/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms\\_087562.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/---stat/documents/normativeinstrument/wcms_087562.pdf)

In its databases, TURKSTAT uses the term ‘unpaid family worker’ instead of ‘contributing family worker’. Furthermore, in the new released database of the annual data for 2007, TURKSTAT has the categories of ‘regular’ and ‘casual’ employee combined.

<sup>84</sup> Despite women are appeared in the official statistics as “unpaid family workers”, they are given the worth of their labor neither spiritually nor materially. The conditions of female employment are quite heavy. While men engage mostly in agricultural works being done by

The second largest group in total agricultural production is “self employed” and then comes “casual employees”.<sup>85</sup>

**TABLE 17: Female Employment Status in Agriculture and Non-Agricultural Activities, 2007 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Total	Regular	Casual	Employer	Self Employed	Unpaid Family Worker
<b>TURKEY</b>						
Agriculture	2728	8	182	14	471	2052
Share (%)	100	0.3	6.7	0.5	17.3	75.2
Non-Agriculture	3052	2491	150	78	159	173
Share (%)	100.0	81.6	4.9	2.6	5.2	5.7
<b>URBAN</b>						
Agriculture	254	5	56	7	56	131
Share(%)	100	2.0	22.0	2.8	22.0	51.6
Non-Agriculture	2540	2123	111	68	126	111
Share (%)	100.0	83.6	4.4	2.7	5	4.4
<b>RURAL</b>						
Agriculture	2474	3	127	7	416	1922
Share (%)	100.0	0.1	5.1	0.3	16.8	77.7
Non-Agriculture	512	368	39	10	33	62
Share (%)	100.0	71.9	7.6	2.0	6.4	12.1

Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007.

In non-agricultural activities, regular employees seem to be the major group in female employment within the context of both total and urban-rural distinction.

While rural women take part in agricultural production mostly as unpaid family workers, i.e. subsistence workers, as an extension of their daily routine, urban women with low educational levels have no alternative except being employed in low-paid and uncovered jobs. However, even “qualified” women with educational background may come across various forms of discrimination in the labor force. The struggle to make a living, pecuniary difficulties and

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machinery, women concentrate in labor intensive works as “seeding, weeding, hoeing and reaping” (Toksöz, 2007: 30).

<sup>85</sup> In agricultural sector, women usually become “self employed” after the death of their husband, dad or brothers.

deepened poverty following the economic crises of the last 20 years forced more and more women into the labor force at any wages. However, economic growth without job creation has yielded noticeable adverse results on female employment, such as high rates of unemployment, existence of thousands of discouraged women, namely 592,000 for urban areas and 339,000 for rural ones in the October 2007, but ready to work if there were opportunity for working decently.

Women are still likely to be employed in status groups that carry higher economic risks with lesser likelihood of promotion;

The poorer the region, the greater the likelihood that women are among the ranks of the contributing family workers or own-account workers. The two statuses together make up the newly defined “vulnerable employment”. Female contributing family workers, in particular, are not likely to be economically independent... Vulnerable employment is a newly defined measure of persons who are employed under relatively precarious circumstances as indicated by the status in employment. Because contributing family workers and own-account workers are less likely to have formal work arrangements, access to benefits or social protection programmes and are more “at risk” to economic cycles, these are the statuses categorized as “vulnerable”. The vulnerable employment rate, therefore, is calculated as the sum of own-account workers and contributing family workers as a percentage of total employment. The indicator is highly gender sensitive since, historically, contributing family work is a status that is dominated by women (ILO, 2008: 3).

According to this definition of the ILO, in the October 2007, the share of vulnerable employment rate for Turkey was 35.2%. While 49.4% of the total female employment was vulnerable in Turkey, the vulnerable employment for males accounted for %30.3 of the total male employment. It should be noted that

the vulnerable employment of women emanates from the excess of the unpaid family workers while of males stems from the excess of self employed workers.

In Table 18, employment by status of workplaces is represented. As can be seen in the Table, the share of the public sector in economy has gradually become smaller not only as an investor, but also as an employer. Almost nine of every ten employees in the total are working in the private sector. This is valid for both sexes. However, the characteristics of female and male employment in private sector mainly differ. While female employees in private sector concentrate mostly in field crop work, male workers are mainly employed in regular jobs.<sup>86</sup>

**TABLE 18: Employment by Status of Workplace, 2006 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Turkey		Female		Male	
	total	share	total	share	total	share
Total Employment	22330	100.0	5810	100.0	16520	100.0
PUBLIC	3019	13.5	713	12.3	2306	14.0
PRIVATE	19311	86.5	5097	87.7	14214	86.0
<i>Field</i>	5987	31.0	2803	55.0	3184	22.4
<i>Regular</i>	11425	59.2	1973	38.7	9452	66.5
<i>Irregular</i>	1627	8.4	72	1.4	1555	10.9
<i>At home</i>	271	1.4	249	4.9	22	0.2

Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, 2006.

<sup>86</sup> According to the definition of ILO, a field crop worker is “a worker whose main job is to drive and operate farm machinery to plant, cultivate, harvest and store various crops” (ILO, 1999:1). In the same study, it is argued that “Field crop workers operate various machinery under changing conditions. They are subject to time pressure and long working hours especially at harvest time. Various distractions are common in field work causing increased accident risk. Safety of agricultural machinery is often inadequate due to potentially hazardous design and use of old and unreliable machinery. Field crop workers are exposed to various chemicals including organic and inorganic irritants” (ibid, p.1). For more information about the hazards related to field crop work, see: International Labour Organization (ILO), *Field Crop Worker*, International Hazard Datasheets on Occupation, Geneva, 1999. Available at the link below: [http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/cis/products/hdo/pdf/wrkr\\_crop.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/safework/cis/products/hdo/pdf/wrkr_crop.pdf)

## CHAPTER 4

### UNEMPLOYMENT

In this part, the unemployment problem on a gender basis is dealt with its all aspects. We cannot consider employment without considering unemployment. Unemployment appears to be a serious and multifaceted problem with both economic and social aspects. The major reasons for high unemployment and the extent of the informal employment have been neoliberal policies implemented irrespective of the demand side of the labor market<sup>87</sup>, inter-regional differences in terms of development, rapid internal migration, incompatibility between the education system and the supply side requirements in the labor market, insufficiency of employment creation relative to working age population growth, and the detrimental effects of the successive economic crises experienced over the last 15 years.

Governments in Turkey have given priority to disinflation policies and supply-side strategies in line with the neoliberal approach rather than the unemployment problem itself, and considered unemployment as a problem with only economic and cyclical effects. Thus, they have failed to anticipate the detrimental effects of lasting high unemployment in terms of social, economic and psychological influences.

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<sup>87</sup> Anyone who wants to know more about the debate about the influence of neoliberal policies on high unemployment should have a look at: Çakın, B., *The Effects of the 2001 Crisis on Labor Market in Turkey*, the Master Thesis Submitted to Istanbul Technical University, June, 2006, pp. 1-100. In order to learn more about this literature, see: Palley, I. Thomas, *From Keynesianism to Neoliberalism: Shifting Paradigms in Economics*, in *Neoliberalism: A Critical Reader*, Saad-Filho, A., and Johnston, D. (eds.), Pluto Press, London; Ann Arbor, 2005, pp. 20-29. See: Stockhammer, E., *The Rise of Unemployment in Europe: A Keynesian Approach*, Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK; Northampton, USA, 2004. See also: Western, B., *Institutions, Investment, and the Rise in Unemployment*, in *The Rise of Neoliberalism and Institutional Analysis*, Campbell, J.L., and Pedersen, O..K. (eds.), Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2001, pp.71-93.

When we turn to the issue of female unemployment, official agendas and bourgeois feminists emphasize the need for female participation in the labor market; however rarely mentioned are the high and perennial unemployment levels, and the unequal and precarious circumstances in labor market. They define the structural problems of labor force as a matter of individual failures or the consequence of improper implementations, and mainly present training programs intended to make women more productive in greater numbers in labor market. We point to the inadequacy and narrow scope of this kind of approach to women's problems in the labor market and rather argue for a comprehensive point of view that will be effective on all policy implementations and for a national employment strategy with gender sensitivity. Therefore, calling attention to the extent of unemployment for the educated population is of great importance in driving proponents of the official agenda and bourgeois feminists to question the adequacy of their actions.

With this aim in view, this chapter consists of five sections. Special attention is given to unemployment by urban-rural area distinction, education, economic activity, economic status, age, reasons and registration.

First of all, an "Overview" of the extent of unemployment according to the official attitude in Turkey is presented; and the inadequacy of official definition of unemployment is highlighted. In this state, the official definition does not reflect the social aspects of the problem. We define a "hidden" unemployment definition that includes not only officially "unemployed" persons, but also the ones who are "not seeking job but available to work" and "underemployed". It is acknowledged that the unemployment problem has reached a far more critical extent for both women and men than the official agenda affirms.

Considering the unemployment levels by urban-rural distinction, it is seen that urban unemployment, for both sexes, is much greater compared to rural unemployment. While urban unemployment rates, on the whole, are alarming, urban female working age population is in the worst condition in all terms. The poor employment creation in non-agricultural sectors is emphasized as a fundamental reason for that situation. The reason for a relatively lower unemployment rate in rural areas is the prevalent employment of women in the



agricultural sector. However, as stated before, this does not mean that they enjoy better and decent living and working conditions.

In the following section titled “The Unemployment Problem since the Year 2000”, it is pointed out that the 2000-2002 crises have caused more perennial pressures and detrimental influences on the labor force in terms of unemployment than the 1994 crisis had. The trend of the persistent high unemployment rates is examined. It is acknowledged that despite achieving a considerable GDP growth, satisfactory employment growth cannot be reached; and the rise in productivity in this period has been owed to longer working hours and worsening working conditions of employees rather than employment growth.

In the third section, “The Distribution of Reasons for Unemployment” is analyzed, and the attention is drawn to the alteration in its character in the course of time. It is seen that between the years 1990 and 1999, the main reason of being unemployed was “looking for a job for the first time” for both women and men. Since then, the most common reason of being unemployed has been “dismissal” for men. For women, however, the most important reason of being unemployed was “looking for a job for the first time” within the years of crises of 2000-2002; and it is acknowledged that almost one out of every two female first-time job seekers was used to work as home maker. In 2003 a considerable rise in “dismissal” of women was observed. Since 2003, the most common reason of female unemployment has seemed to be “quitting the job”. We argue lastly in this sub-section that this trend of the structure of female unemployment reminds “the reserve army theory” of Marx and the situation of women in the US during the World War II years.

In the fourth section, “The Youth Unemployment Problem” is introduced. This is important, since it gives specific basis for the employment creation problem of Turkey. It is seen that the youth unemployment rate for both sexes is twice as much as the rate of overall unemployment. The youth unemployment continues high levels especially in the non-agricultural sector. The fact that the rate of unemployment among young university graduates is higher than the rate for the young non-university graduates is also observed. The unemployment rate for young female university graduates is observed to be

higher than young male's with the same degree. Furthermore, this is also valid for young high and vocational high school graduates; the unemployment rates for female with the mentioned degrees are almost twice as much as the male unemployment rate with the same levels of education.

The fifth section entitled "Unemployment by Educational Level" consists of two sub-sections. The importance of education in the author's opinion is firstly emphasized. Then a critique of neoliberal perception about education that principally assesses education in terms of personal economic benefits within market mechanism and developmental externalities is represented. The most crucial point about this section for the thesis is to display the high unemployment rates among university graduates. For this aim, the first sub-section of this section brings an "Overview" of unemployment rates by educational levels to the attention of the reader. It is observed that the overall unemployment rate for university graduates is higher than the total unemployment rate. It is also seen that the unemployment rate for female university graduates is twice as much as the rate for male university graduates. We also perceive that male unemployment rates by educational levels do not acquire any considerable difference in degree, except for the category of the illiterate. Female unemployment, on the other hand, varies substantially from one another due to different educational levels. We realize that the highest female unemployment rate by educational levels is among the high school and its equivalents graduates. This is valid for both urban and rural areas. However, in both urban and rural areas, the unemployment rates for female university graduates is observed to be higher than the total unemployment rates for ones with the same degree in each area. Another interesting point to be mentioned is that for both urban and rural areas, the lowest female unemployment rates are found among illiterate women.

In the sub-section entitled "The Female Unemployment Rates by Educational Level and Age Groups", the unemployment rates by educational level for the 25 and over aged population are firstly examined. The reason not to involve the 15-24 age category is the higher likelihood of completing the official educational life of the members of 25 and over age group; this let us achieve more reliable conclusions. It is shown that for men 25 years old and over, except

for the category of the illiterate, the unemployment rates by different educational levels stays lower than the overall unemployment rates for each educational level. Furthermore, male unemployment rates for different educational levels do not differ significantly from one another. For women in the same age group, however, the unemployment rates for graduates of high school graduates and its equivalents and university are substantially higher than the total unemployment rates for each level.

In order to see whether female unemployment rates by educational level improves at any age group, female unemployment by age groups and educational level is analyzed. It is seen that until the age of 35, the unemployment rate for female university graduates does not show a satisfactory improvement in terms of parallel course with the total or male unemployment. One out of every three unemployed females between 25 and 34 ages is graduated from university. On the other hand, the unemployment rate for female high school graduates still stays considerably high even between 35 and 54 ages. Therefore, we confirm that the young and educated female population accounts for the main group that is directly subjected to the detrimental influences of unemployment in Turkey. Young female university graduates mostly stay unemployed at critical ages for having a career and its maintenance. This situation is closely related to the sexual division of labor in the private sphere where women are seen as the main person that is responsible for household chores and child rearing. Furthermore, as discussed before under the title of “Labor Force Participation by Age Groups”, the high cost of childcare services makes working decision impossible, and obliges persons to adopt the sexual division of labor, voluntarily or involuntarily.

#### **4.1. An Overview**

Unemployment, in its simplest definition, represents “the gap between the labor force and employment” (The World Bank, 2006: ii). According to the definition of TURKSTAT used in the Household Labor Survey, the

unemployment rate is “the ratio of unemployed persons to the labor force” (TURKSTAT, 2006: 156) and the category of “unemployed” involves;

all persons 15 years of age and over who were not employed (neither worked for profit, payment in kind or family gain at any job even for one hour, who have no job attachment) during the reference period who have used at least one channels for seeking a job during the last three months and were available to start within two weeks (TURKSTAT, 2007: 155).

This definition is apparently inadequate to give any extensive insight into the real state of the labor market. As can be understood from the definition that has been made in accordance with the ILO standards, wanting a job, on its own, is not adequate to be considered as unemployed. One must be seeking job actively during the reference period. However, there are people who are not included in the definition of unemployed, but do not work at any job.<sup>88</sup> These marginalized persons, do not seek work; since they have lost their all hope to obtain employment. In other words, these discouraged persons are “those persons outside the labor force who want work but are not actively looking for a job because they think their search would be in vain” (Rosen, 1973: 31).<sup>89</sup>

There is Table-19 concerning the official and hidden unemployment rates for the period 1990-2007 below. According to the October 2007 findings, the overall unemployment rate was 9.7%. There seems to be no significant difference between the overall male and female unemployment rates. However, considering the non-agricultural unemployment rates, one can observe a significant gap between the rate for females and males with 18.6% versus

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<sup>88</sup> While calculating the hidden unemployment, not only the “discouraged” persons but also persons categorized under the sub-group of “other” are included in the reckoning, that is, all persons who fell under the category of “not seeking a job but available to start a job” are taken into account.

<sup>89</sup> For further reading about the psychological aspects of the unemployment, see the following excellent books: Winefield A.H., Tiggemann M., Winefield H.R., and Goldney R.D., *Growing up with Unemployment: A Longitudinal Study of its Psychological Impact*, Routledge, New York; London, 1993., and see also: Broman, C.L., Hamilton V.L., and Hoffman W.S., *Stress and Distress among the Unemployed: Hard Times and Vulnerable People*, Kluwer Academic/Plenum, New York, 2001.

10.7%, respectively.<sup>90</sup> This shows that finding job in non-agricultural sectors is more difficult for women than men. According to the data provided in the table, women amount for 29.2% of the total unemployed persons.

It is obviously seen that the unemployment problem is far beyond the data supplied by any official agency. According to the October 2007 data, while the number of women underemployed<sup>91</sup> was 116,000; those who did not seek a job but were available to work amounted to 931,000. When comprising these groups in the calculation of unemployment rate, one gets quite a higher rate of female unemployment rate which is 27.2%. Recalculating the unemployment rate for males by using the same method, we get a rate of male excess labour of 16.8%.

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<sup>90</sup> The non agricultural unemployment rate is a significant indicator to image the real extent of the unemployment problem. According to the definition of “unemployed”, people worked at any job even for one hour during the reference period are not considered as unemployed. Therefore, the official unemployment rate for agricultural sector has been underestimated; this situation leads open unemployment to be underestimated not only in rural areas, but also over all Turkey. That is why the non-agricultural unemployment rate is an important indicator in order to comment more truly on labor market data.

<sup>91</sup> According to ILO, “Underemployment refers to persons who are [involuntarily] in employment of less than normal duration and who are seeking or would accept additional work” (See the following link from the website of ILO: [http://www.ilo.org/global/What we do/Statistics/topics/Underemployment/history/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/topics/Underemployment/history/lang--en/index.htm) ).

and “Underemployment reflects underutilization of the productive capacity of the employed population, including those which arise from a deficient national or local economic system. It relates to an alternative employment situation in which persons are willing and available to engage” (ILO, 1998: 1). TURKSTAT measures ‘underemployment’ in two groups, namely ‘visible’ underemployment and ‘other’ underemployment. According to TURKSTAT, visible underemployment refers to “persons who work less than 40 hours because of economic reasons during the reference period and are able to work more” (TURKSTAT, 2007: 155). The economic reasons is described as follows:

-Slack work for technical and economic reasons,

-There was no work,

-Could not find full-time job,

-The job has just started and/or has come to an end during the last week (ibid).

‘Other’ underemployment refers to “persons who are not in the above group who want to change his/her present job or are seeking a further job because of an insufficient income or because of not working in his/her usual occupation” (ibid). For further information about underemployment, see the following link from the website of ILO:

[http://www.ilo.org/global/What we do/Statistics/topics/Underemployment/guidelines/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/topics/Underemployment/guidelines/lang--en/index.htm)

**TABLE 19: Official and Hidden Unemployment, (1990-2007) (Thousand; Percentage)**

	1990	1995	2000	2007
<b>TOTAL</b>				
Not seeking job but available to work	324	250	1139	1733
Underemployed	1485	1523	1591	717
Unemployed	1522	1655	1497	2458
Hidden unemployment	3331	3428	4227	4908
Labor Force	20552	22567	23078	25208
Hidden unemployment rate (%)	16.2	15.2	18.3	19.5
Unemployment rate (%)	7.4	7.3	6.5	9.7
Non-Agricultural unemployment rate (%)	12.4	11.0	9.3	12.3
<b>FEMALE</b>				
Not seeking job but available to work	162	107	429	931
Underemployed	128	183	176	116
Unemployed	486	512	387	717
Hidden unemployment	776	802	992	1764
Labor Force	6387	6489	6188	6497
Hidden unemployment rate (%)	12.1	12.4	16.0	27.2
Unemployment rate (%)	7.6	7.9	6.3	11.0
Non-Agricultural unemployment rate (%)	24.1	21.1	13.5	18.6
<b>MALE</b>				
Not seeking job but available to work	163	143	711	802
Underemployed	1357	1340	1416	601
Unemployed	1037	1143	1111	1741
Hidden unemployment	2557	2626	3238	3144
Labor Force	14165	16078	16890	18711
Hidden unemployment rate (%)	18.1	16.3	19.2	16.8
Unemployment rate (%)	7.3	7.1	6.6	9.3
Non-Agricultural unemployment rate (%)	10.1	9.0	8.4	10.7

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 1990, October 1995, 2000, October 2007.*

Considering the unemployment rates by urban-rural area distinction, one is confronted with huge discrepancies. As can be seen in Table 20, according to the October 2007 data, the non-agricultural female unemployment rate was 18.3%, while the same rate for males was 10.4% in urban areas. The situation becomes to be more worrying if it is discussed in terms of the hidden unemployment rates. The hidden female unemployment rate in urban areas was almost twice as much as the non-agricultural female unemployment rate.

While the data for urban areas seems to indicate that the urban population has been experiencing more difficulties with finding jobs than the rural population, women represent the group having the poorest situation in urban areas in all terms. In rural areas, the non-agricultural unemployment rates display the real extent of the unemployment problem. The non agricultural female unemployment rate was 19.9% compared with a rate of 11.6% for males.

**TABLE 20: Official and Hidden Unemployment Rates by Urban-Rural Area Distinction, 2007 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	URBAN			RURAL		
	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male
Not seeking job but available to work	1024	592	433	708	339	369
Underemployed	365	70	295	352	46	306
Unemployed	1811	578	1233	647	139	508
Hidden unemployment	3200	1240	1961	1707	524	1183
Labor Force	15379	3372	12007	9829	3125	6704
Hidden unemployment rate	20.8	36.8	16.3	17.4	16.8	17.6
Unemployment rate	11.8	17.1	10.3	6.6	4.4	7.6
Non-Agricultural unemployment rate	12.1	18.3	10.4	12.8	19.9	11.6

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007.*

## 4.2. The Unemployment Problem since the Year 2000

The successive economic crises of the last 15 years have increased the vulnerability of the labor force. Even before the effects of the previous crisis had abated, a new wave of recession hit the economy.

The changes in unemployment rates after 2001 are given in Table-21 below. The unemployment rates do not seem to recover their pre-crisis level either for women or men. Another important issue is that the labor force seems to have been more adversely affected by the 2000-2002 crises than by the 1994 crisis. The overall unemployment rate being 7.4% in 1990, increased to 9.2% in 1993 and in 1994 it showed a declining tendency with a rate of 8.3%.

**TABLE 21: The Unemployment Rates Since the year 2000, (2000-2006) (Percentage)**

	2000	2001	2002	2004	2005	2006
<b>TOTAL</b>						
Total	6.5	8.4	10.3	10.3	10.3	9.9
Urban	8.8	11.6	14.2	13.6	12.7	12.1
Rural	3.9	4.7	5.7	5.9	6.8	6.5
<b>Female</b>						
Total	6.3	7.5	9.4	9.7	10.3	10.3
Urban	13	16.6	18.7	17.9	17.0	16.4
Rural	2.0	1.7	3.0	3.2	4.1	4.3
<b>Male</b>						
Total	6.6	8.7	10.7	10.5	10.3	9.7
Urban	7.8	10.3	13.0	12.5	11.6	10.9
Rural	4.9	6.5	7.3	7.3	8.1	7.6

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, 2000-2006.*

This declining tendency lasted until 2000 when the unemployment rate decreased to 6.5%. However, in the last quarter of the year 2001, the unemployment rate jumped to 10.4%, the highest in 13 years, and in 2002 it stood at 10.3%. Since then, the unemployment rate has not seemed to recover its pre-2001 level. The jumps in the unemployment have also been dramatic in numbers. While the number of the unemployed persons was 1.497.000 in 2000, it shot up to 1,967,000 in 2001 and to 2,464,000 in 2002. In 2006, the number of the unemployed persons was 2.446.000 and the unemployment rate was 9.9%, which was too high to mention the presence of a recovery.

Furthermore, despite the macroeconomic upturn experienced after the year 2002, unemployment has still seemed to be a persistent problem. The real rate of GDP growth in 2004 (being 8.9%) increased by 53.4% compared to the 2003 level (5.8%), while the unemployment rate in 2004 (10.3%) decreased only by 2% compared with the 2003 rate (10.5%).

One of the main reasons for this situation is the gain in productivity which is rooted in longer working hours rather than rises in employment. Employers prefer to obtain the pre-crisis production level via either fewer workers or making the current employees work more than the former level.



Thus, while even the GDP grows in real terms, a perceptible rise in employment can not be experienced.

...between 2002.I and 2005.IV the average rate of growth in real GDP was 7.5%. In contrast the rate of change of employment averaged minus 0.1% over the same period. Over the sixteen quarters..., GDP growth was positive in all periods. Yet, labor employment growth was negative in 9 of those 16 quarters (Voyvoda and Yeldan, 2006: 14).

Considering Turkish economic history, one observes that in spite of high economic growth periods experienced, long term sustainable economic growth can not be ensured, nor can the unemployment problem be avoided. Despite the fact that the unemployment problem has not only economic but also social effects., the official agencies neglects the social aspect of the problem and analyzes it only within the context of the economic policy, within the disinflation programs, high economic growth and supply-side strategies in particular, which makes the problem more difficult to be understood fully.<sup>92</sup>

### **4.3. The Distribution of Reasons for Unemployment**

The reasons for being unemployed are categorized under three main headings, which are ‘quitting the job’, being ‘dismissed’, and ‘looking for a job for the first time’, by the TURKSTAT.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> There are some empirical studies concluding that although unemployment has been one of the factors which has influenced economic growth in Turkey, the economic growth, no matter whether a high or low path of economic growth is concerned, does not have any effect on preventing the unemployment nor on its presence. This means that, there is a unilateral correlation between the economic growth and unemployment and the high rate of economic growth does not necessarily imply a healing effect on the unemployment. For more information, see: Yılmaz, Ö.G., *Türkiye Ekonomisinde Büyüme ve İşsizlik Oranları Arasındaki Nedensellik İlişkisi (The Causality Relationship between the Economic Growth and Unemployment Rates in the Turkish Economy)*, *Ekonometri ve İstatistik (Econometrics and Statistics Review)*, No.2, 2005, pp.11-29.

<sup>93</sup> These three main categories have been separated into subgroups by TURKSTAT. The category of “dismissed” is divided into the subgroups of “temporary workers”, “bankruptcy”,

The Figure-8 concerning the distribution of overall unemployment by reasons is given below. In the early 1990s, while looking for a job for the first time seemed to be the most common reason for being unemployed, being dismissed has become the major reason of being unemployed due to the rapid increase in the rate of the dismissed persons since the year 2000.

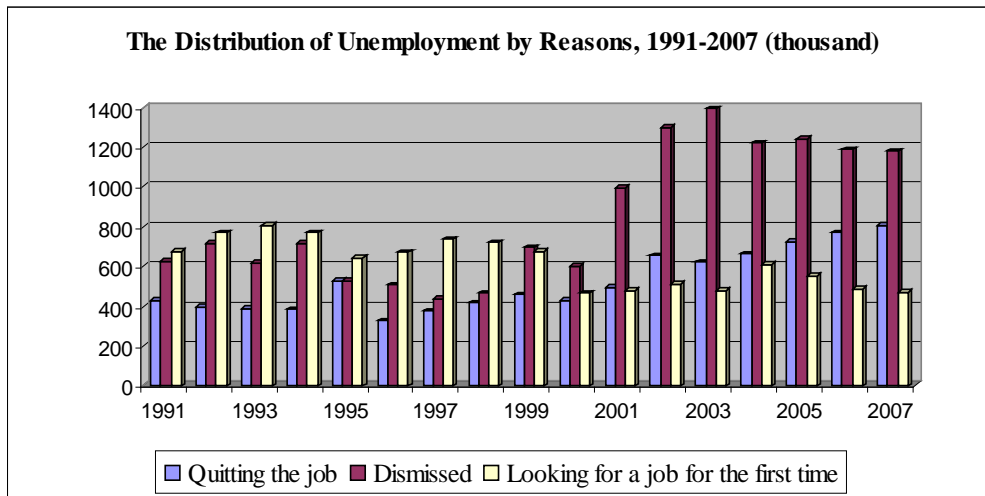
The major reason for being unemployed have differed specifically between the 1991-1998 periods and the post-1999 period. In the former period, the most common reason for being unemployed was “looking for a job for the first time”. In 1991, the unemployed persons looking for a job for the first time accounted for 38.9% of the overall unemployed persons, versus the share of 36.3% of the dismissed persons. This difference became more noticeable especially after the year 1993, except the close rates experienced in 1994 (41.1% for the ones looking for a job for the first time and 38.4% for the dismissed ones). In 1993, the persons looking for a job for the first time accounted for 44.5% of the all unemployed persons, while the unemployed persons lost their jobs due to the dismissal constituted 34.0 % of the total unemployment. Lastly, in 1998, there were 1,606,000 unemployed persons<sup>94</sup>, of which 722,000 (45.0%) were looking for a job for the first time and 466,000 (29.0%) were dismissed from their jobs.

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“other”. The category of “quitting the job” involves the subgroups of “voluntarily”, “retired”, “used to be unpaid family worker”, and “other”. The category of “looking for a job for the first time” is composed of the subgroups of “newly graduated”, “still student”, “other”, and “newly finished his military service” for males, and “used to be on housework” for females.

<sup>94</sup> In the Household Labor Survey of TURKSTAT, the number of unemployed persons was given as 1,616,000. However, according to the Dynamic Search Database of TURKSTAT, again, the same aggregate amount was derived as 1,606,000. Inconsistency between the aggregate amounts emanates from its own databases of TURKSTAT. Similar problems concerning the aggregate amounts can be observed in other tables, as well. Totals may not tally due to rounding off by TURKSTAT.

**FIGURE 8:**



Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, October 1991-1999, 2000-2006, October 2007.

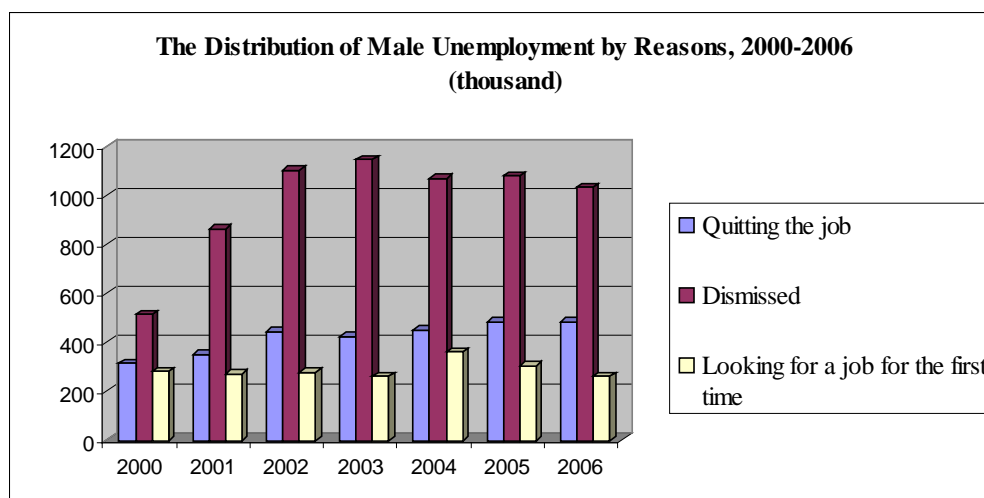
In 1999, for the first time in years, the dismissed persons (695,000) exceeded first-time job seekers (675,000) by 20,000, and this quantitative domination of the dismissal as a reason for being unemployed has expanded over the following years. In 2001, 1,967,000 persons were officially unemployed, of which 997,000 persons (50.7%) were unemployed due to the dismissal, 493,000 persons (25.1%) were the ones who quitted their jobs, and the remaining 477,000 persons (24.3%) were looking for a job for the first time. In 2003, the share of the dismissed persons among the all unemployed hit the 15 year peak, that is, 55.9% of the unemployed persons fell out of work because of dismissal from employment in the mentioned year, just after the 2000-2002 crises.<sup>95</sup>

While gender is factored into the reasons for being unemployed, in the 2000-2006 period, one draws some noteworthy conclusions. For both the female and male labor force, dismissals have rocketed since the year 2000 (See: Figure 9 and 10). In 2003, While 62.6% of the total unemployed male persons were out of work due to the dismissal compared to 37.7% of the unemployed female persons. However, in 2003, compared to the previous year, the unemployed female population due to dismissal increased by 28.6% (55,000 in numbers)

<sup>95</sup> The mass job losses in the formal economy due to the successive economic crises, have led to increase not only the overall unemployment, but also the enlargement of the informal employment.

while the unemployed male population due to dismissal increased only by 3.9% (43,000 in numbers).

**FIGURE 9:**



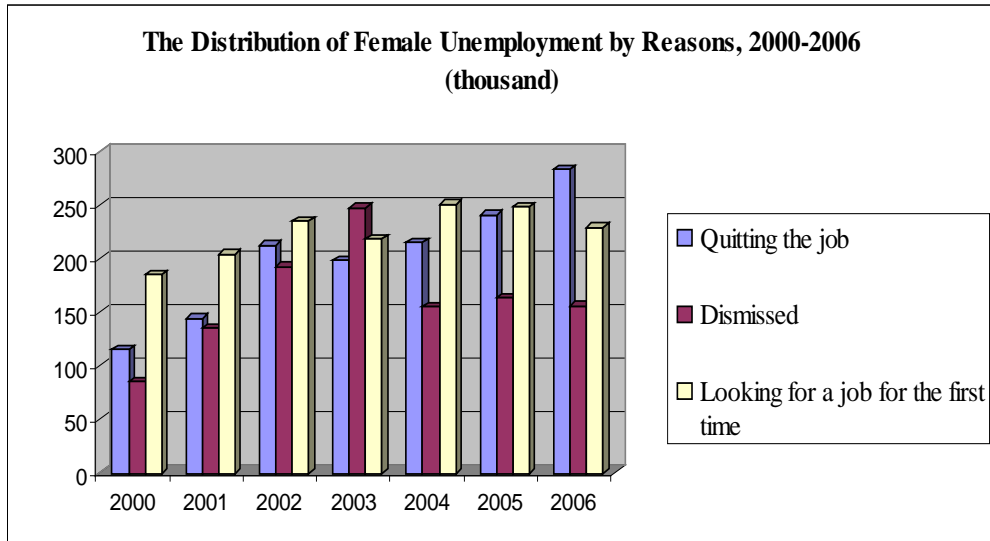
Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, 2000-2006.

As can be seen in Figure-9, despite the slight decrease being experienced after the year 2003, dismissal has still seemed to be the most common reason for being unemployed for the male labor force, with a share of 56.8% in 2004, of 57.8% in 2005, and of 58.1% in 2006.

For the female labor force, on the other hand, while dismissals displayed an upsurge in the 2000-2003 period, during the crises, the sudden increase in the number of female persons, who looked for a job for the first time, has also been clearly noticeable (See: Figure-10).

This increase was clearly perceived, especially during the years of crises, the years of 2000-2002. In 2001, the share of female first-time job seekers accounted for 42.9% of the total unemployed population compared to 57.1% of the total unemployed population for the unemployed male persons.

**FIGURE 10:**



Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, 2000-2006.

However, considering the annual growth rate of the unemployed population looking for a job for the first time by gender, one sees that in 2001, compared to the previous year, the unemployed female population which fell in the category of “looking for a job for the first time” grew by 10.3% (19,000 in numbers), while the unemployed male population in the same category decreased by 3.5% (10,000 in numbers). After the year 2004, the percentage of female unemployment in the category of ‘looking for a job for the first time’ has been showing a decreasing trend.

The Table-22, which is related to the distribution of female unemployment by reasons between the years of 2000-2007, is given below. Women, who were used to be in housework accounted for 39.4% of the unemployed women who looked for a job for the first time in 2004. Unfortunately, there is no available data concerning the share of women who were used to be on housework in the total unemployed females looking for a job for the first time for the crisis years 2000-2002. It is highly probable that the category of “other” for the females looking for a job for the first time involved the ones who were doing housework between the years 2000-2003.

**TABLE 22: The Distribution of Female Unemployment by Reasons, (2000-2007) (Thousand)**

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>DISMISSED</b>								
temporary worker	52	46	74	144	66	67	62	90
bankruptcy	8	14	21	23	20	23	28	31
other	25	75	97	80	69	73	66	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>171</b>
<b>QUITTING the JOB</b>								
voluntarily	69	83	108	112	109	116	126	176
retired	3	3	4	2	5	3	3	3
unpaid family worker	-	-	-	-	7	2	5	4
other	43	58	100	84	94	120	149	134
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>317</b>
<b>LOOKING for a JOB for the FIRST TIME</b>								
newly graduated	89	74	87	91	91	58	79	90
used to be on housework	-	-	103	81	99	121	112	107
still student	-	-	-	-	39	50	20	23
other	96	130	45	46	22	19	18	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>228</b>

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, 2000-2006, October 2007.*

The successive crises of the millennium resulted in a rapid deterioration of the living conditions of most people and it seems that the crisis-time conditions forced a number of women into the labor force when men lost their jobs. However, this tendency did not come up with a radical transformation of women's position within the labor force. The incentive behind these endeavours to take part in the labor force was mainly family-centered, and was mostly concerned the cooperation within the family members and harmony in the family relations in the face of the crises. Indeed, these endeavours which related to self-sacrifice fit well with the dominant cultural definition of "being a woman" and with her family-oriented role.<sup>96</sup> This situation reminds women's experience during the Second World War in the United States and Britain and the reserve army theory.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Indeed, most of women have proceeded accordingly with these conservative values as well, in order not to be isolated or marginalized. This has contributed to the persistence of traditional domestic values, consciously or unconsciously.

<sup>97</sup> During the Second World War, by creating active symbols, women were invited to join the labor force in order for patriotism and on the other hand, after the wartime, they could not get beyond patriarchal control with passive conventional roles in the private sphere. The state

#### 4.4. The Youth Unemployment Problem

In this part, the extent of the youth unemployment is discussed. As has been mentioned before, Turkey has been experiencing difficulties in employment creation in general. “From 1980 to 2004, the working age population grew by 23 million, but only 6 million net jobs were created” (WB, 2006: 12). In particular, there have been severe difficulties in youth employment creation and the young age group, which consists of persons 15-24 years of age, “constitutes a higher-risk group in terms of new entrance to the labour market” (Ercan, 2007: x). The extent of the unemployment problem among the young population seems to be more serious than the overall unemployment problem.

The young unemployed persons (858,000 in numbers) accounted for 35.1% of the overall unemployment (2,447,000 in numbers) in 2006. Again, according to the 2006 findings, 32.6% of these unemployed people aged 15-24 years have been long-term unemployed.<sup>98</sup> For the same year, the long-term unemployment rate for the young female unemployed population (302,000 in

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authority associated with capitalist economy, called women to duty by national propaganda in the case of necessity in order to provide a workforce. The most dramatic example for that occurred in the USA during the Second World War. The contemporary role model of the USA government was Rosie the Riveter: “Rosie [the Riveter] was a happy housewife who took a man’s job only to serve her country in its time of need, and who willingly returned to the hearth at the war’s end” (Milkman, 1987: 22). For the mentioned situation of women in Turkey during the 2000-2003 period, one can say that in the time of need, housewives started to look for a job to “supplement the family income” and returned to the hearths at the end of the recession period. For the wartime experience of women, see: Anderson K., *Wartime Women: Sex Roles, Family Relations, and the Status of Women During World War II*, Greenwood Press, 1981, and see: Honey, M., *Creating Rosie the Riveter*, The University of Massachusetts Press, 1984, and Summerfield, P., *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral Histories of the Second World War*, Manchester University Press, 1998, and Duchon, C. and Bandhauer-Schöffmann, I. (eds.), *When the War was Over: Women, War, and Peace in Europe, 1940-1956*, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2000.

<sup>98</sup> The term “long term unemployment” is used to mention the sum of the unemployed persons for “one year or more than a one year and less than two years”, “two years or more than two years and less than three years” and “three years or more than three years”.

numbers) was 38.4% (116,000 in numbers), compared to 29.5% (164,000 in numbers) of the young male unemployed population (556,000 in numbers).<sup>99</sup>

Considering the unemployment rate by age groups, one concludes that the unemployment reaches its highest rate among persons of 15-24 years of age. The 15 to 24 years old population accounted for 18.1% of the Turkish labor force according to the October 2007 data. In Table-23, comparison between the unemployment rate for the young labor force and for the working age population is given.

Despite the increase since the year 2000, there is a valid fact concerning the young unemployment rate for all the years examined; the unemployment rate for the young persons has been almost twice as much as the overall unemployment rate for every year given in the table.

**TABLE 23: Unemployment Rates for the Young Labor Force, (1990-2007) (Percentage)**

	Total	Female	Male
<b>1990</b>			
15-24	15.3	13.9	16.1
15+	7.4	7.6	7.3
<b>1995</b>			
15-24	15.3	14.6	15.7
15+	7.3	7.9	7.1
<b>2000</b>			
15-24	13.1	11.9	13.7
15+	6.5	6.3	6.6
<b>2006</b>			
15-24	18.7	19.7	18.2
15+	9.9	10.3	9.7
<b>2007</b>			
15-24	19.8	21.5	18.9
15+	9.7	11.0	9.3

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 1990, October 1995, 2000-2006, October 2007.*

<sup>99</sup> For a helpful article on the unemployment duration by gender, see: Tansel, A. and Taşçı H.M, *Determinants of the Unemployment Duration for Men and Women in Turkey*, ERC Working Paper in Economics, 04/04, METU, 2004, pp. 1-38.



This is valid in gender terms, as well. The unemployment rates for young female population are slightly higher than young male unemployment rates for the mentioned years. According to the October 2007 data, one in every five young persons, regardless of sex, was unemployed. Reconsidering the unemployment of the young population by looking at the non-agricultural unemployment rate, one comes up with a higher rate of unemployment, again close to twice the overall non-agricultural unemployment rate. For instance, in 2006, the non-agricultural unemployment rate of the 15-24 age group was 22.8% while the overall non-agricultural unemployment rate was 12.6%.

What is more worrying than the high unemployment among the young population is the high unemployment rate among the educated young population. The unemployment rate for the young university graduates was 31.1% (27.4% in the year 2006) in the October 2007 while the unemployment rate for the young female university graduates aged 15-24 was 32.3%, versus 29.8% of the male university graduates. The unemployment rate of young female high school graduates was 28.5%, and for young vocational high school graduates it was 32.0%; whereas it was 21.3% for young male high school graduates and 17.8% for young male vocational high school graduates.

This shows that Turkey has been experiencing a severe bottleneck concerning the employment creation for her young population, especially for the ones with higher educational level.

#### **4.5. Unemployment by Educational Level**

In this part, unemployment by educational level is examined. In theory, education, especially the higher education, is a significant self-experience that compels individuals to question their own standpoint, and cause them to gain mental power and critical perspective lasting till death. Apart from the official course sections, one opens his/her mind to perceive surroundings in a different manner which was previously unfamiliar.

The neoliberal perception on the subject of education has degraded the function of higher education almost to the role of a factory where workers who

are well-matched with the needs of the market are expected to be produced. Having a university degree is introduced as the main purpose of enrolling at a university. The meaning of the university degree becomes comparable with those of ‘certificate’ and ‘instrument of accession’. Aside from few long-established universities, the role of ‘university’ has been reduced to nothing more than a ‘career center’ in Turkey.

The mainstream development agencies, both national and international, highlight mainly the personal economic benefits and developmental externalities from education rather than the intellectual gains. One may commonly come across statements in the official declarations made by these agencies, which are the fruit of the endeavor to emphasize the potential personal benefits to be provided by means of the market so as to represent the matter as if there is a consensus on it, and it is not just another zero-sum game. On the other hand, the high rate of unemployment keeps on driving both men and women out of employment by discouragement. Unemployment among university graduates has got stuck in high levels.

Furthermore, high unemployment among the educated young population impairs not only the social value of the education and but also the belief that education is essential to have an economically better way of life. Achieving economic independency has been presented as the only way out for ending the inequalities faced by women. Neoliberal agendas reduce the problem which has deep social, cultural, political and economic roots, to a problematic of individuals’ personal matter.

Furthermore, the problem of employment creation prevents obtaining the better use of gains from education. Increases in public income and the proper usage of this income are required to have education improved not only quantitatively but in quality.

#### **4.5.1. An Overview**

The overall unemployment rate for university graduates is higher than the total unemployment rate (See: Table 19 and 24). Table-24 below shows that

According to the October 2007 Household Labor Force Survey results, while the rate of unemployment among female university graduates is higher than the overall unemployment rate for university graduates, the unemployment rate of male graduates is lower than the overall rate for graduates. The unemployment rate for female graduates is almost twice as much as the rate for male graduates.

The highest rate of female unemployment is observed among the graduates of high schools and its equivalents.<sup>100</sup> For males, on the other hand, the unemployment rates do not differ significantly with reference to educational status, except for the illiterate males.

**TABLE 24: Unemployment Rates by Educational Level, 2007 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Unemployed	Labor Force	U. Rate (%)
<b>TOTAL</b>			
Illiterate	63	1122	5.6
Below High School	1346	15263	8.8
High School and its equivalents	679	5471	12.4
College and University	370	3351	11.0
<b>FEMALE</b>			
Illiterate	16	760	2.1
Below High School	251	3365	7.5
High School and its equivalents	267	1234	21.6
College and University	183	1137	16.1
<b>MALE</b>			
Illiterate	47	363	12.9
Below High School	1095	11898	9.2
High School and its equivalents	412	4237	9.7
College and University	187	2214	8.4

Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, October 2007.

In Table-25, the unemployment rates by educational level and urban-rural distinction is examined. In October 2007, high school graduates were the

<sup>100</sup> Education that is given in training school does not seem to match with the needs of employees. Besides, training school female graduates have also more limited employment opportunities than male graduates owing to few jobs considered “appropriate” for women. For a comparative study on high schools and its equivalents, see: Tansel A., *General versus Vocational High Schools and Labor Market Outcomes in Turkey*, Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), Economic Research Forum Working Paper No. 99/05, Ankara, 1998.

group with the highest rate of unemployment in the urban Turkey, while the unemployment rate among the college and university graduates was the lowest unemployment rate. In the rural Turkey, persons with high school degree constituted, again, the most vulnerable group, while the lowest unemployment rate was appeared among the illiterate persons.

Considering the differences between female and male unemployment rates by urban-rural distinction, one is faced with a familiar fact. For females, without any urban-rural distinction, the panorama of unemployment exhibited a characteristic similar to that of the rural Turkey. This means that both in urban and rural areas, the highest female unemployment rate was recorded among the graduates of high school or its equivalents, while the lowest unemployment for females was experienced among the illiterate women. Another important point is that both in rural and urban areas, the female unemployment rate among the college and university graduates exceeded the total unemployment rate among persons having a university degree.

**TABLE 25: Unemployment Rates by Urban-Rural Distinction and Educational Level, 2006 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Urban		Rural	
	thousand	share(%)	thousand	share(%)
<b>TOTAL</b>				
Illiterate	39	13.0	16	1.7
Below High School	998	12.4	412	5.8
High School and its equivalents	517	13.1	170	12.1
College and University	247	9.5	46	9.8
<b>FEMALE</b>				
Illiterate	9	6.4	3	0.5
Below High School	203	15.8	61	2.8
High School and its equivalents	201	22.3	56	21.5
College and University	118	12.8	19	14.2
<b>MALE</b>				
Illiterate	31	18.5	13	5.1
Below High School	795	11.8	351	7.1
High School and its equivalents	316	10.4	114	10.0
College and University	129	7.7	27	8.1

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, 2006.*

As for male unemployment by educational level, in rural areas, the results are also similar to the findings for the rural Turkey, while the urban

unemployment rates by educational level for males presented the ‘ideal’ panorama of the human capital model, which refers to the highest unemployment rate among the illiterate males, and to the lowest unemployment rates among the male university graduates. Apart from the male unemployment rate among the illiterate in urban areas, all rates of male unemployment remained below the total unemployment rates for each category.

#### **4.5.2. The Female Unemployment Rates by Educational Level and Age Groups**

The Table-26 concerning the unemployment rates by educational level for the population 25 years old and over is given below. In October 2007, 63.2% of the unemployed population was 25 years old or over, while 81.9% of the total labor force, and 83.9% of the total employed population consisted of 25 years old or over persons. In the same period, the unemployment rate for the population aged 15 years and over was 9.7%, compared to 7.5% for the population 25 years old or over. This differentiation results from the exclusion of the youth unemployment from the unemployment calculation. Leaving the youth unemployment out of the calculation enables one to observe the structure of the population that is likely to finish officially the educational life. In his pioneering book, Bulutay conveys his observations in accordance with the April 1992 findings as follows;

...when one investigates the unemployment rates for people of 25<sup>+</sup> years of age, there is no important difference among different levels of education. For example, the unemployment rate is 11.1% for primary school graduates<sup>101</sup> and 32.6% for high school graduates in the 12-24 age group. The same rates are 6.08% and 6.32% respectively for those in the 25 and over age groups (Bulutay, 1995: 238-9).

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<sup>101</sup> In the table, the category of “below high school” graduates is equivalent to the category of primary school graduates.

This observation of Bulutay is ascertainable for the total population and male population except the category of illiterate, according to the October 2007 findings.

For the female population, however, the unemployment rates by different educational levels differ substantially from one another.

**TABLE 26: Unemployment Rates by Educational Level, 2007 (25+ Ages) (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Unemployed	Labor Force	U. Rate (%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	1553	20634	7.5%
Illiterate	45	1038	4.3%
Below High School	956	12763	7.5%
High School and its equivalents	326	3946	8.3%
College and University	224	2884	7.8%
<b>FEMALE</b>	391	4985	7.8%
Illiterate	8	703	1.1%
Below High School	168	2674	6.3%
High School and its equivalents	111	713	15.6%
College and University	102	893	11.4%
<b>MALE</b>	1162	15649	7.4%
Illiterate	38	337	11.3%
Below High School	788	10091	7.8%
High School and its equivalents	215	3233	6.7%
College and University	120	1991	6.0%

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, October 2007.*

As can be seen in Table-26, for females, high school graduates aged 25 years or over, had the highest unemployment rate among the other educational categories. This was followed by the category of female university and college graduates. One needs to examine the female unemployment rates by educational level and age groups so as to pass a clear judgment on the distinct character of the female unemployment. Considering the female unemployment rates by educational level and age groups, one observes that the high rate of unemployment has detrimental effects mostly on young and educated female population (See: Table-27). The rates for the age groups 15-24 and 25-34 are conspicuous when female unemployment by age groups and educational level is considered.

**TABLE 27: Female Unemployment by Age Groups and Educational Level, 2007 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Unemployed	Labor Force	U. Rate (%)
<b>15-24</b>	326	1513	21.5%
Illiterate	8	57	14.0%
Below High School	83	691	12.0%
High School and its equivalents	156	521	29.9%
College and University	79	244	32.4%
<b>25-34</b>	247	1997	12.4%
Illiterate	2	77	2.6%
Below High School	81	940	8.6%
High School and its equivalents	78	435	17.9%
College and University	86	545	15.8%
<b>35-54</b>	137	2448	5.6%
Illiterate	4	341	1.2%
Below High School	83	1501	5.5%
High School and its equivalents	33	269	12.3%
College and University	17	337	5.0%
<b>55+</b>	5	541	9.0%
Illiterate	1	285	0.4%
Below High School	3	235	1.3%
High School and its equivalents	-	10	-
College and University	1	11	9.1%

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, October 2007.*

It is not until the age of 35 that a significant similarity, as Bulutay argues, is observed for the female unemployment rates among the categories of educational level. The unemployment rate for the female university graduates aged 15 to 24, was 32.4%, and the unemployment rate among the high school graduates (29.9%) was the second highest rate among the other categories.

The unemployed female university graduates aged 15 to 24 accounted for 24.2% (79.000 in numbers) of the total female unemployment for the same age group. This means that one out of every four unemployed young females had a university or college degree.

For the age group 25-34 years, the unemployment rate among the female university graduates and high school graduates decreased almost by half compared to the 15-24 age group. However, the unemployed female university graduates made up 34.8% of the total female unemployed population in the 25-34 age group, that is, almost one in every three unemployed females aged 25 to 34 was graduated from either a university or college. This implies a worse-off situation than women were in beforehand.

The number of unemployed female university graduates between the ages of 35 and 54, decreased to 17.000 in numbers and the unemployment rate among them reduced to 5%, which displayed a significant similarity with the unemployment among the other females with different educational level. In the age group of 35-54, the unemployed female university graduates accounted for 12.4% of the total female unemployment. On the other hand, the unemployment among female high school graduates still seems to be high.

It is obvious that female university graduates could not be employed steadily in the labor market, especially at the ages of 25 to 34. This means that young and educated women remain unemployed in a time period that is critical in the success and maintenance of their careers. After this kind of a long interruption, it may be hard to find any job or keep up with current developments in the labor market where the length of experience and age are among the main criteria even in order to be invited to any job intercourse. As mentioned previously under the subtitle “labor force participation”, this fact is closely related to the common perception about the ‘limits’ of women and the responsibilities expected from them within the sexual division of labor, where men are seen as bread winners and heads of the family, and women concern themselves with children’s needs and household chores. The declarations of the official national or international agencies mainly focus on the low level of female education. However, this problem of the current educated and young female labor force is at least as important as the education problem.



## CHAPTER 5

### THE INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT

There are various definitions for informal economy. ILO defines the informal sector in a broad sense as “consisting of units engaged in the production of goods or services with the primary objective of generating employment and incomes to the persons concerned. These units typically operate at a low level of organization, with little or no division between labour and capital as factors of production and on a small scale. Labour relations - where they exist - are based mostly on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees”.<sup>102</sup> And the international definition of informal economy that was adopted in the 15th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), in 1993, is as follows: “The informal economy...includes private unincorporated enterprises (excluding quasi-corporations), which produce at least some of their goods and services for sale or barter, have less than 5 paid employees, are not registered, and are engaged in non-agricultural activities (including professional or technical activities)”.<sup>103</sup> The TR. Ministry of Labour and Social Security defines unregistered unemployment as “not informing of the working status or the income of the workers to the related public institutions (i.e. tax offices, social security offices etc.) or lack of information on number of working days and wage earned”.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> For this definition and more about how to define informal economy, see the following link from the website of the ILO:

<http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/strat/kilm/download/kilm07.pdf>

<sup>103</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> For the definition, see the following link from the website of the Ministry:

[http://www.calisma.gov.tr/sgb\\_web/sunum/ing.pdf](http://www.calisma.gov.tr/sgb_web/sunum/ing.pdf)

One of the major problems in the Turkish working life has been the great extent of informal employment, in which workers are deprived of legislative and institutional protective mechanisms including the social security coverage.

The mainstream policies performed in the 1980s, which served the purpose of integrating the economy to the world markets, also affected the social security institutions both directly and indirectly, and restricted the financial capability of the Turkish social security system (Özsuca, 2003). On the other hand, growing impoverishment, increasing inequalities among the people, the flexibilization of the labor markets in accordance with the imposition of the mainstream agencies such as the IMF and World Bank and the pressures from the employers, intensified the need for the legal protection and social security coverage for the bulk of the population. These practices of lowering the labor costs to have profit maximization contradict the necessities in the social field. The supply side policies that intend primarily to reduce the labor costs endanger social peace, balance and justice to a serious extent.

In such case where deficient social security coverage, decreasing agricultural employment, and the poor rate of utilization from unemployment payments have seemed to be serious problems to be handled with the assistance of structural reforms, and where the severance payments should be secured; the World Bank considers all policy implementations relating to the social state, i.e. severance pay, unemployment payments, and agricultural subsidies, as financial burdens on the markets. While neoliberal policies regarding the integration to world markets and financial liberalization weaken the financial capability of the government sector in order to make large-scale social policies applicable, growing income inequalities and the flexibilization of the labor markets, on the other hand, have intensified the demands of the people for social security protection more and more.

To be a social scientist, requires questioning the effects of compromises from the social state and the compromises given, themselves. For this purpose, in this chapter, the informal employment is examined in terms of social security registration, economic activity, economic status, education, and urban-rural distinction.

This chapter specially aims to call attention to the fact that half of the total employed population, and more than half of the female employees, work in unacceptable conditions and without any social protection in order to carry on just minimal living standards. We argue that the demand of the international neoliberal agendas, IMF and the World Bank, for flexible labor markets contradicts the increasing requirement for social security, social priorities and Turkey's socio-economic circumstances. Then the inadequacy and hollowness of the implementations that aims to support employment is examined by means of two examples of implementations from the Turkish recent history, namely "The Draft Bill on Job Security" and "The Unemployment Insurance". Then an "Overview" that shows the extent of unregistered employment is introduced. It is seen that the most vulnerable group is rural female workers. Nine out of every ten female workers in rural areas are deprived of any social security coverage or legal protection. Almost three out of every five female workers have neither legal work arrangements nor social security; and nearly one out of every two male workers is unregistered.

The following section deals with "The Extent of the Social Security Registration by Economic Activity". It is acknowledged that the majority of unregistered employees work in the agricultural sector which is the main sector where women are employed. It is pointed out that almost all female workers lack any social security protection.

In the section titled "The Status of the Unregistered Workers in Employment", the distribution of workers by status in informal economy is given in agricultural and non-agricultural terms. In the agricultural sector unpaid family workers constitute the majority of unregistered female population, while it is self employed ones for men. In non-agricultural sector, the majority of unregistered female and male employees work as regular workers. While three out of every four unregistered female workers work as unpaid family workers in the agricultural sector, in the non-agricultural sector, one out of every two unregistered female workers lack the basic necessities to lead a decent life.

In the last section entitled "The Situation of the Registered Unemployed Persons", firstly the job placement performance of the Turkish Employment Organization (ISKUR) is analyzed. Then the distribution of the registered

unemployed persons waiting to be employed for more than one year by educational level is introduced. The majority of the female registered unemployed persons who is waiting for more than a year to be employed by ISKUR are high school graduates, whilst it is primary school graduates that constitute the bulk of male registered unemployed waiting for more than a year. It is seen that the job placement duration of unemployed males with a bachelor's degree or two years of education at university is lower than that of female having the same educational level. The ratio of job placements by educational levels is also represented. More than half of the total persons that are placed in a job by ISKUR have an educational degree below high school, whereas the share of persons with a higher degree than high school in job placement stays below 10%. It is also acknowledged that the rate of job placements for men is higher than that of women with the same educational level, except the master degree.

## 5.1. An Overview

There have been some official endeavors to support the current employment and to lessen the barriers against the employees in experiencing their basic rights in working life. For instance, "The Draft Bill on Job Security", Law no. 4773, which was first introduced to the Cabinet in the year 2000, and was suspended due to the resistance of the employers' organizations, became effective on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2003.<sup>105</sup> This draft bill remained effective till the enforcement of the Labor Law no. 4857 on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2003. The Job Security Bill was, actually, a consequent commitment of the ILO Protocol No. 158, which was signed in 1995 by Turkey.<sup>106</sup> According to this draft bill, only employees, who have at least length of six months' service in workplaces with ten workers or more workers, are able to utilize from the job security mechanisms. In 2003,

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<sup>105</sup> For the full text of the draft bill on Job Security, see:  
<http://www.belgenet.com/yasa/k4773.html>

<sup>106</sup> For the report form of 'Termination of Employment Convention (No.158), 1982' of the ILO, see: <http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/reportforms/pdf/22e158.pdf>  
For the list of the ILO conventions that Turkey adopted, see:  
<http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-byCtry.cfm?lang=ENandCTYCHOICE=0660>

however, there were 21,147,000 persons employed, of which 14.119.000 persons (66.8 %) were employed in workplaces with nine employees or less, and the remaining 7,028,000 persons (33.2 %) were employed in workplaces where ten workers or more were employed (Source: TURKSTAT, 2007: 170). Likewise, in 2006, 62.9% of the total employees were not included in the extent of the draft bill on Job Security.

According to the draft bill, participating in union activities outside working hours or, with the consent of the employer, within working hours, labor union membership, race, sex, religion, political view, and pregnancy can not be cited as a reason by employers for the rescission of labor contracts of the employees being covered by this bill. On the other hand, the rescission of labor contracts by reasons of improper behavior, inefficiency of workers, or business requirements -the reasons related to the economic distress in brief- are not seen as unfair rescission (See: Article 13/A of the Law no. 4773). Therefore, workers, who have been made redundant by economic factors, do not have the right to sue the employer or make any claim for compensation. Besides, the extent of the category of “improper behavior” is not clarified by the law; therefore the presence of this category as a justification of the rescissions opens the way to abuse, and what is worse is that this kind of abuse can not be confirmed by any legitimate proceedings. Despite pleasing legal arrangements of the draft bill in theory and its affected style, in practice, the employer intending to discharge a certain number of workers, does not have difficulty in finding reasonable causes or excuses.

The Unemployment Insurance was also created to assist the employee, in mitigating the effects of unemployment by the Law no. 4447, which was enacted on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1999 and became effective on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2000.<sup>107</sup> Since March 2002, the unemployment benefits have been paid to the unemployed persons who satisfied the appropriate conditions.

However, the stipulated conditions to be satisfied are severe. Only the registered employees, who paid at least their premium payments of 600 days during the course of the last three years and the premium payments of the last

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<sup>107</sup> For the full text of the Law no. 4447, see: <http://www.belgenet.com/yasa/k4447.html>

120 days before the dismissal without interruption for certain, have the right to apply. Besides, neither the amount of disbursement nor the payment scheme meets the requirements of the right holders. The amount of the disbursement is based on the four month's average earning and 50.0% of this fourth monthly average wage is undertaken to be paid. Consequently, the amount of the payment does not exceed the net minimum wage.

On the other hand, the utilization rate seems to be quite low as well. From March 2002 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008, 1,455,238 persons applied to the system and 1,286,400 of the applicants were entitled to the dole. As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008, the aggregate amount of the unemployment fund is 38,352,000,000 YTL, of which 1,828,703,960, 49 YTL was paid to the unemployed persons (IŞKUR, 2008: 5). This means that only 4.8% of the fund has been used up for the unemployed persons.

Beside all these mentioned problems, the capitalist elites who are the large owners of many enterprises in Turkey have obviously coveted the unemployment fund, and they have exerted considerable pressure on the government for several years.<sup>108</sup>

Considering the social security registration of employed persons in 2006, one sees that 48.5% of the overall employment, 66% of the total females employed, and 42.3% of the total males employed lacked any kind of social security coverage. That is, in numbers, out of 22,330,000 employed persons, 11,503,000 persons were registered; that is, the half of the employed persons was working without any social security coverage.

Of all registered workers, only 17.2% were women. In the Table-29 below, the distribution of the employees without any social coverage between the rural and urban areas in 2006 is given. There were 10,827,000 unregistered workers, of which 6,240,000 persons (57.6%) were employed in rural areas, and the remaining 4,588,000 (42.4%) workers worked in various cities. The poor

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<sup>108</sup> See some news figured in the papers about this issue: [http://www.evrensel.net/haber.php?haber\\_id=6329](http://www.evrensel.net/haber.php?haber_id=6329), on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007, [http://www.emo.org.tr/genel/bizden\\_detay.php?kod=60171andtipi=3andsube=14](http://www.emo.org.tr/genel/bizden_detay.php?kod=60171andtipi=3andsube=14), on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2008, [http://www.sendika.org/yazi.php?yazi\\_no=19902](http://www.sendika.org/yazi.php?yazi_no=19902), on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Default.aspx?aType=HaberDetayandArticleID=903600andDate=16.10.2008andCategoryID=101> on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

condition of the workers being employed in rural areas draws attention at first sight. 67.5% of the total employees in rural areas have been working without any social security coverage. Female workers in rural areas appear to be the poorest of the poor, that is, 89.3% of the female workers in rural areas have not been officially recorded. This means that in rural areas, nearly nine out of every ten female employees have been working without any social security or guarantee.

**TABLE 28: The Share of the Unregistered Employees by Urban-Rural Area Distinction, 2006 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Unregistered	Employed	share (%)
<b>TOTAL</b>			
Total	10827	22330	48.5
Urban	4588	13081	35.1
Rural	6240	9249	67.5
<b>FEMALE</b>			
total	3834	5810	66.0
Urban	1067	2712	39.3
Rural	2767	3098	89.3
<b>MALE</b>			
total	6994	16520	42.3
Urban	3521	10368	34.0
Rural	3473	6152	56.5

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, 2006.*

The circumstances of the workers in urban areas do not seem to be satisfactory, either. The condition of the urban workers can be considered pleasing only as compared with the one in rural areas. In urban areas, one in every three workers was deprived of any legal protection or insurance.

## **5.2. The Extent of the Social Security Registration by Economic Activity**

The pressure relating to public debt repayments and Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) has forced the developing countries to lower the costs of labor since the 1980s. This pressure to lower the labor costs impaired

the social security protection of the people, and brought about the deprivation of most of the population from legislative and institutional protective mechanisms including the social security coverage. Justifying their practice on the ground of high costs of labor, employers tend to have their present employees work longer hours than recruiting new ones or they prefer employing new workers informally. In this way, employers acquire the opportunity to make use of a lower waged and flexible labor force thanks to the informal employment and to avoid the social costs of the labor force.

This process results in the continuance of the limited employment creation, in spite of output growth. In high-tech sectors, cheap labor is not expected to create any advantages to the employers nor the economy; on the contrary, low wages in high-tech sectors reduce the comparative competitiveness of the firms and overall economy due to causing brain drain. The labor-intensive sectors are the ones in which the “developing” countries are able to compete with one another by means of lowering the costs of labor.<sup>109</sup>

The Table-30 concerning the social registration of employees by the sectors in which they worked is presented below, and the data confirms this phenomenon.

The informal employment in the agricultural sector stands out from the other sectors. In the period of 1995-2006, while the agricultural employment has been shrinking rapidly, the employment in industry sector remained relatively limited to compensate for the employment losses; and a reasonable employment creation has been achieved only in services sector accompanied by the widespread informal employment.

Almost all female workers being employed in the agricultural sector worked without any social security coverage. Of all unregistered female workers, 72.5% were employed in the agricultural sector. The informal employment in the agricultural sector accounted for 77.6% of the total male employment in the agricultural sector, while the unregistered male workers in

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<sup>109</sup> However, the implementation of the policies supervised by the IMF in almost all developing countries, which intended the attenuation of the social security mechanisms in order to reduce the labor costs, resulted in the failure of all these countries in establishing any superiority over others (Özsüca, 2003).



the agricultural sector constituted 36.3% of the total unregistered male employment.

**TABLE 29: The Social Security Registration of Employed Persons by Economic Activity, 2006 (Thousand; Percentage)**

	Total		Female		Male	
	total	share	total	share	total	share
<b>TURKEY</b>	22330	100.0	5810	100.0	16520	100.0
Registered	11503	51.5	1976	34.0	9526	57.7
Unregistered	10827	48.5	3834	66.0	6994	42.3
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>	6088	100.0	2816	100.0	3272	100.0
Registered	769	12.6	36	1.3	732	22.4
Unregistered	5319	87.4	2780	98.7	2539	77.6
<b>INDUSTRY</b>	5674	100.0	873	100.0	4801	100.0
Registered	3522	62.1	468	53.6	3054	63.6
Unregistered	2152	37.9	405	46.4	1747	36.4
<b>SERVICE</b>	10569	100.0	2121	100.0	8446	100.0
Registered	7212	68.2	1472	69.4	5739	67.9
Unregistered	3357	31.8	649	30.6	2707	32.1

Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, Dynamic Search, 2006.

46.4% of the total female employment in the industry and 30.6% in the service sector were out of any mechanism of the social security system. This means that in 2006, almost all of the female workers in the agricultural sector, and one out of every two female employees in the industrial sector, and one out of every three female employees in the service sector were uninsured.

### 5.3. The Status of the Unregistered Workers in Employment

There is the Table-30 related to the distribution of workers in informal economy by status in employment according to the October 2007 data. 98.6% of women and 90.8% of men, who worked as unpaid family workers, and 91.6% of women and 61.5% of men, who worked for their own account, and 22.3% of

women and 21.1% of men having the status of regular employee, lacked any social security coverage (See: Table 16 and Table 30).

For the total female informal employment, while 73.6% of the total female workers in informal economy were employed in the agricultural sector, the unpaid family workers formed the largest group with a share of 59.7% of the total female informal employment. It was followed by own account workers and regular employees with shares of 15.7% and 15.2%, respectively.

**TABLE 30: The Distribution of Workers in Informal Economy by Status in Employment, 2007 (Thousand)**

	Total		Agriculture		Non-Agriculture	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Regular Employee	558	1940	5	56	553	1883
Casual Employee	315	1249	182	242	133	1007
Employer	29	364	14	61	15	303
Own account worker	577	2597	464	1499	113	1097
U. family workers	2195	838	2040	588	155	250
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3675</b>	<b>6987</b>	<b>2706</b>	<b>2447</b>	<b>969</b>	<b>4540</b>

*Source: TURKSTAT, HLFS, October 2007.*

Considering the female employment in informal economy by agricultural and non-agricultural activities, 75.4% of women being employed in the informal agricultural production, were unpaid family workers. On the other hand, 57.1% of female workers who were employed in the non-agricultural activities in informal economy were regular employees.

For the total male informal employment, own account workers constituted the largest group with a share of 37.2% of the total male informal employment. The status of regular employee had the second rank in the total male informal employment with a share of 27.8%, which was close to the share of own account workers.

## 5.4. The Situation of the Registered Unemployed Persons

In this part, the state of the officially registered unemployed persons<sup>110</sup> is introduced in terms of ascending new applicants<sup>111</sup>, the poor achievement in job placements<sup>112</sup>, and the educational level of the unregistered unemployed persons and the job placement of those.

**TABLE 31: The New Application and Job Placement of the Registered Unemployed Persons in ISKUR, 2007-2008 (Percentage)**

	New Application	Job Placement	Registered Unemployed
<b>2007</b>			
Total	33258	5612	707671
Female	8745	1167	179992
Male	24513	4445	527679
<b>2008</b>			
Total	180990	7439	987840
Female	46771	2131	263502
Male	134219	5308	724338
<b>Change Ratio (%)</b>			
Total	444.2	32.56	39.6
Female	434.8	82.6	46.4
Male	447.5	19.4	37.3

*Source: ISKUR, Monthly Statistics Bulletin, December 2008.*

The Table-31 above is related to the official job placement performance by the Turkish Employment Organization (ISKUR). Considering the number of applications and registered unemployed persons, the job placement mechanism seems to perform poorly. The effects of the ongoing global financial crisis can also be perceived from the data. According to the results of the December 2008 data collected by ISKUR, the applicants increased by 444.2% compared to the

<sup>110</sup> Registered unemployed person is defined as “a person who is at the working age, able and wishes to work and who, at the time of application the employment office, was earning less than minimum wage and not placed to a job by the employment office yet” by the Turkish Employment Organization (ISKUR, Statistical Yearbook, 2007: VI).

<sup>111</sup> The term “applicants” is used for the job seekers who apply directly to the employment office to find a job (ISKUR, *ibid*).

<sup>112</sup> In the own definition of the ISKUR, job placement means “putting an unemployed person to work” (ISKUR, *ibid*).

same month of the previous year. According to the data for December 2008, the job placements, however, improved only by 32.56% to 7,439 persons, compared to the same month of the previous year.

Furthermore, the number of registered unemployed persons rose by 39.6% with respect to the same month of the previous year to 987,840 persons in 2008. In the same year, %26.7 of the total registered unemployed persons were female, and only 28.6% of the persons being placed in a job were female.

Furthermore, the registered unemployed persons, who waited for being employed for more than a year, were 260.884 in numbers; of which 20.2% (52,626 in numbers) were female.

**TABLE 32: The Distribution of the Registered Unemployed waiting for more than a year to be employed by Educational Level, 2008 (Percentage)**

	thousand	share(%)
<b>MALE-TOTAL</b>	208258	100%
Illiterate	3610	1.7%
Literate	4457	2.1%
Primary School	95912	46.1%
High School and its equivalent	79464	38.2%
Two Years of Education at University	15646	7.5%
Bachelor's Degree	9019	4.3%
Master Degree	145	0.1%
Doctorate	5	-
<b>FEMALE-TOTAL</b>	52626	100%
Illiterate	3320	6.3%
Literate	1806	3.4%
Primary School	13776	26.2%
High School and its equivalent	20208	38.4%
Two Years of Education at University	8143	15.5%
Bachelor's Degree	5249	10%
Master Degree	122	0.2%
Doctorate	2	-

*Source: ISKUR, Monthly Statistics Bulletin, December 2008, Table 13.*

In Table-32, the distribution of the registered unemployed persons waiting for more than a year by educational level in the December 2008 is

shown. For the registered unemployed females, the high school graduates appears to form the majority of the unemployed persons for more than a year, while for males, the primary school graduates constituted the largest share of the total unemployed males waiting for more than a year.

The number of the total registered unemployed males with primary school education was 362,086 of which 26.5% was formed by the unemployed ones for more than a year. This means that one of every four primary school male graduates were unemployed for more than a year. Likewise, the number of the total registered unemployed females with high school education was 96,603 and 20.9% of those was unemployed for more than a year.

21.7% of the total registered unemployed males with bachelor's degree were out of employment for more than a year, while 18.4% of the total registered unemployed females with the same degree were unemployed for more than a year.

On the other hand, the share of the unemployed males with university degree among the total unemployed males for more than a year was recorded as 4.3%, while the share of female graduates among the unemployed females for more than a year was 10%.

The males who received two years of education at university constituted 7.5% of the total unemployed males waiting for more than a year to be employed, while the female ones with the same education level accounted for 15.5% of the total females being unemployed for more than a year.

The job placement duration of unemployed males with a degree higher than high school is lower than of females with the same educational level. This is a representative instance of gender-based discrimination regardless of educational level during the hiring process.

The Table-33 given below is pertinent to the distribution of applicants, unemployed persons and persons placed in a job by the educational level, according to the annual survey results of the year 2007 released by the ISKUR.

In 2007, there were 696,538 unemployed persons registered in the ISKUR, of which 10,475 persons (1.5%) were illiterate, 16,877 persons (2.4%) were literate without any degree, 313,160 persons (45.0%) had a degree below the high school level, 255,350 persons (36.7%) graduated from high school or

its equivalents, 56,939 persons (8.2%) accomplished a two years of education in university, 42,652 persons (6.1%) attained a bachelor's degree, and 1,085 persons (0.2%) completed their education with a degree higher than bachelor's degree.

On the other hand, 111,375 job placements were accomplished in 2007. The sum of the persons placed in a job, who were illiterate, literate or had a degree below the high school, accounted for 58.0% (64,639 in numbers) of the total persons placed, while the graduates from the high school or its equivalents constituted 32.1% (35,713 in numbers) of the total persons placed in 2007.

**TABLE 33: The Distribution of Applicants, the Ones Placed in a Job and Unemployed by Educational Level, 2007 (Percentage)**

	Applicatio n	Unemployed	Job Placement	The Ratio of Job Placement
<b>FEMALE</b>				
Illiterate	5367	5037	67	1.3%
Literate	5703	5117	739	14.4%
Primary School	58164	55299	10591	19.2%
High School and its equivalent	64607	69442	7931	11.4%
Two Years of Education at University	18952	23412	2173	9.3%
Bachelor's Degree	15947	17533	1856	10.6%
Master Degree	598	552	42	7.6%
Doctorate	30	11	1	9.1%
<i>TOTAL</i>	169368	176403	23400	13.3%
<b>MALE</b>				
Illiterate	5520	5 438	253	4.7%
Literate	14545	11760	2 817	24%
Primary School	244814	257861	50172	19.5%
High School and its equivalent	166544	185908	27782	14.9%
Two Years of Education at University	26422	33527	4068	12.1%
Bachelor's Degree	28717	25119	2848	11.3%
Master Degree	943	505	35	6.9%
Doctorate	96	17	0	-
<i>TOTAL</i>	487601	520135	87975	16.9%

*Source: ISKUR, Statistics Year Book, 2007, Tables 6, 21 and 25.*

However, the share of the placed graduates from bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree programs in the total persons placed in a job was only 9.9%

(11,023 in numbers) for the same year. This fact is valid for the year 2008, as well. According to the December 2008 findings, 60.0% of the job placements were accomplished on behalf of the persons who had an educational level below the high school, 32.2% of the placed persons graduated from high school or its equivalents, and the remaining 7.8% consisted of the persons with a higher degree than high school (ISKUR, 2008: 3).

Although the majority of both the applicants and registered unemployed persons seemed to be “qualified” or have a proficiency in any branch of knowledge, most of the ones placed in any job were “unskilled” workers. The ISKUR provides a clarification to this fact as follows; “This fact stems from that the open job positions requires rather the use of unskilled workers and the demand for the unskilled workers exceeds the one for skilled workers” (ISKUR, 2008: 4). In the same document, however, it is stated that 52.1% of the open jobs received by the ISKUR in December 2008, addressed the demand for “unskilled” workers, while the remaining 47.9% requires “skilled” workers. In the same month, while 63.4% of the persons placed in a job were “unskilled” workers, “skilled” workers constituted 36.6% of the total persons placed in a job.

Despite the fact that the demand for “unskilled” workers exceeds the demand for “skilled” workers to a rather small degree of 4.2%, there was a considerable difference of 26.8% between the shares of “skilled” and “unskilled” workers in job placements. “Skilled” workers seem to experience more various difficulties than the persons classified as “unskilled” workers by the official agencies.

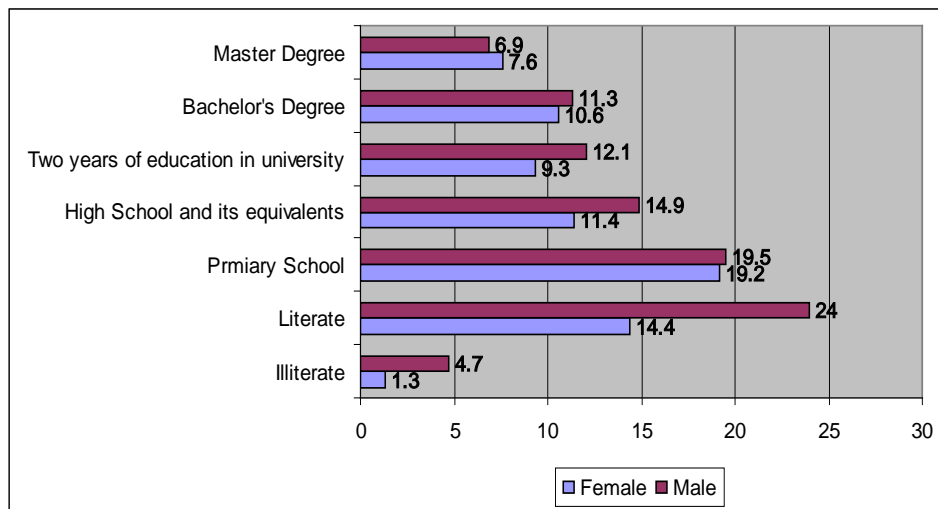
The high educational level can be seen as a reason for being unemployed among the young population to some extent. Educated young persons may prefer to remain unemployed ‘for a while’, if they can stand the psychological and monetary costs of being unemployed, rather than to work at jobs with lower wage and worse conditions than they expected. However, considering the unemployment durations of the registered unemployed ones by educational level, it seems that in reality, the matter can not be limited to the higher

expectations. The composition of job creation favors unskilled workers. Employers may not want overqualified workers even for low wages.

As can be perceived more clearly by the Figure-11 related to the distribution of job placements by educational level, the job placement rates for males and females approach each other except for the illiterate and literate categories.

However, the job placement rates are still higher for males in all levels of education, except the master degree. Furthermore, there can not be seen any advantage in the job placement process thanks to the high educational level.

**FIGURE 11: The Distribution of Job Placements by Educational Level, 2007 (Percentage)**



*Source: ISKUR, Statistics Year Book, 2007, Tables 6, 21 and 25.*

This shows that discrimination based on gender is a permanent part of job recruitment processes and employers prefer to hire male workers rather than female ones regardless of the educational level.



## CONCLUSION

In a broad sense, the main aim of the thesis was to emphasize that ensuring gender equality has never been the mainspring agenda of governments. Our emphasis has been a critique of liberal and elite discourse. The problems of women have been disregarded by the mainstream agendas; and have mainly been considered in terms of economic externalities, namely bringing women into the public sphere. The problems of women have only interested the mainstream circles in situations in which their interests match those of a liberal feminist agenda. The issue of female labor force participation caught the attention of the mainstream academics and policy makers in the times of recession particularly when there was a need for cheap labor to assist newly emerging markets. In a particular sense, this thesis aimed to criticize the prevalent method of approach of the mainstream agendas to women's problems, which is to emphasize exclusively the significance of education and participation in work-force in terms of economic advantages and externalities.

To reach this aim, in the first chapter, the historical composition of the method of the approach and the motives of the mainstream agenda to deal with women's problems were introduced. To emphasize the limits and narrowness of this mainstream point of view, which represents the education as the key to end all problems, we handled the situation of women, in particular educated women, in the labor force by the help of the statistics in the second chapter. In this context, women's position in the Turkish labor market was examined in the chapters, which were "Labor Force Participation", "Employment", "Unemployment", and "Informal Employment" respectively.

In the second chapter, the general review of the trend of the female labor force participation, the reasons of being out of the labor force for women, and the female labor force participation by age and educational level were introduced. It was acknowledged that the female labor force participation is

much lower than that of men and has been showing a decreasing trend especially since the 1990s in Turkey. The main reason for this trend appeared to be the dropping trend of the agricultural employment due to mainly migration, the mechanization of the agricultural production processes and the neoliberal policy implementations of the integration process with the world markets.

The agricultural labor force and its circumstances have generally been neglected by governments in Turkey. The majority of the policy implementations concerning the agricultural sector have been intended to function in the land owners' favour. The prevalence of the poverty among the agricultural labor force is unquestionable. Women predominate in the agricultural labor force, and the majority of them are employed as unpaid family workers, namely they have no control over either their labor or the returns of their labor, and they lack any kind of social security coverage. The Social Security for agricultural workers is optional in contemporary Turkey. It is clear that a social security system that is based on premium payments does not prevent the exclusion of the unpaid family workers from the social security system. We have some recommendations. The government should take its role of being a "social state" seriously, which is defined in the Constitutional Law among its fundamental aims and duties. It is essential to develop a new social security system that will be able to work for all strata of society and will provide the inclusion of agricultural workers in social security system. The proper policies that will enable women to have the returns of their labor should be urgently put into practice.

It was also observed that the female labor force participation in urban areas is much lower than that of rural ones. Successive governments in Turkey have emphasized the need for improving the female labor force participation in the non-agricultural sectors. However, without providing sufficient employment opportunities and better work environments in the non-agricultural sectors, forcing the agricultural population to migrate to the cities through indirect political and economic pressures inevitably creates low labor force participation, social unrests and tragedies.

Therefore, it is essential to sustain agricultural employment and family farms, and assist the agricultural labor force in order to prevent further migration

and to create more satisfying work conditions for both women and men. This sustainment of employment must be achieved undoubtedly via a more fair income and authority distribution between both the land owner and landless workers and among agricultural workers themselves.

The social and economic conditions of the country should receive priority consideration, and endeavors of decreasing the agricultural population to working age population ratio as low as that of the EU due to concerns related to the membership process should be brought to an end. Committees that will enable academicians and non-governmental organizations to make their opinions and suggestions to be heard by the people should be founded. This will re-establish the interrupted relation between the universities and non-governmental organizations, and the people.

Rural women's problems can not be thought of separate from the general problems of agriculture. Therefore, any attempt to improve the agricultural production and employment will have its effects on women's position in the mentioned sector.

Examining the reasons of being out of the labor force for women, it became obvious that the method of data collection of TURKSTAT and the categories chosen to be 'reasons' are highly gender biased and inadequate to give satisfactory idea of the real reasons of the marginalization from the labor force. According to the results of the survey of the TURKSTAT, the main reason of being out of the labor force for women is to be "housewife". This is valid for women with university degree as well. According to the official agenda, one out of every three female university graduates was out of the labor force due to being "housewife" in the October 2007. This kind of categorization shows an image of the way the official authorities sees women. A comprehensive method to provide women the circumstances for introducing their problems with their own words and naming their own problems should be adopted, and all kinds of statements biased against women should be eliminated.

Furthermore, it was seen that the discouraged worker effect on the marginalization of women from the labor force is of considerable size, especially for women with university degree. This shows the need for a more extensive point of view that goes beyond the programmes specific to women,

and the requirement for a national strategy in which women's problems are considered together with the basic problems in the labor market, namely sexual division of labor, high unemployment, and poor employment creation.

Studying about the labor force participation by age, we saw that while urban women's employment is mainly interrupted early in life, namely between the ages of 29 and 34, due to child rearing, the male labor force participation in urban areas for the mentioned age group, does not indicate any decrease. On the contrary it shows an increasing trend.

Another significant point to be marked was that such an interruption is not observed for rural women, as well. This is due to a more prominent contradiction of the locations of production --work and home-- in urban areas. In the course of time, by the elimination of the home based production under the process of the maturation of capitalist system, the dualism of the public and private sphere has deepened the sexual division of labor, and the house makers' labor has got its contradictory position under the generalization of capitalist production relations.

The influence of this dualism between the public and private sphere on women's lives and careers was observed by examining the distribution by the status of person taking care of working mother's baby under the age of six. Men's lives or their careers do not seem to be affected by having children at all. On the contrary, it was seen that working women, no matter what their educational levels or the locations are, try to reduce the burden of their double lives mainly by transferring the child rearing to other women, namely their mothers in law, mothers, or elder female children. This means that women having children participate in the public sphere at the cost of subjecting other women to the private sphere. Furthermore, the share of the utilization of the institutional care service remains too low to mention satisfactory assistance. Law No. 4857, in which the requirement of providing child care services of workplaces is arranged, is highly gender biased, and should be immediately rearranged in a way that will eliminate the understanding of considering only the mother responsible from children. We also reject the proposal of providing material assistance that aims to leave the operation of childcare services in the hands of the market mechanism. The child-care service should be seen as a

public good and should be provided by local authorities for free for not only working persons but to anyone.<sup>113</sup>

The author of the thesis finds the presentation of the childcare services as provided by governments and the private sector gender biased, pragmatic and detrimental to feminist movements in the long run. There is an example of the point of view of the OECD;

These days, governments in many countries often actively encourage women to go out to work. Their reasons vary. At one level, it's an attempt to ensure equality between men and women. Less obviously, getting women working can help address a wider range of social and economic issues. Take, for instance, child poverty...There's another factor driving governments to get women into the workforce: demographics. It is a curious fact that although the number of people in the world doubled since the early 1960s, some countries are seeing, or about to see, real falls in their populations...Women are having fewer children, which means in the future there will be fewer people of working age to pay for things like pensions and social welfare benefits... To increase that level, societies face the challenge of finding ways to *allow women both to work and to be mothers*. On the surface, *those goals might seem contradictory*, but they don't have to be. *With adequate childcare systems in place, women are more likely to feel that they can raise children and maintain a career* (Keeley, 2007: 44-46).<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Beyond all ideological and theoretical debates, there is nothing more worthy than the right to live. We do not want anybody to experience hurtful incidence similar to that of Necla Karagöz. Necla Karagöz is a 32 year old woman who divorced two years ago and lives with her three children of 13, and 6 years and 8 month old in Çorlu, in Turkey. On the 22<sup>th</sup> March 2009, she left the house early in the morning in order to look for a job. When she came back to home, she saw that her house burnt down and her 8 month old baby was dead, and 6 years old child was injured. She told that "I struggled for my children's happiness my whole life. My elder child told me that their school manager asked all students for fee, and he was ashamed since we do not have money to be paid. After this event, I decided to look for a job. I was ready to work at any kind of job." For the original form of this item, see:

<http://www.corluhaber.com/haber/?oku=11849> , and:  
<http://www.milliyet.com.tr/default.aspx?aType=SonDakikaandArticleID=1075224>

<sup>114</sup> Emphasis added by the author, P.K.

Since the mainstream agenda considers women's problems separate from the general problems of the market, the official manner of having women participate more in labor force is to be achieved by harmonizing the responsibility of motherhood and work. In this point of view, the mainstream agenda does not argue for the equal share of the burden of child rearing between the sexes. This understanding does not serve the aim of eliminating the conventional sexual division of labor in the private sphere; on the contrary it very much helps the reproduction of the traditional roles in the long run. Despite its ostensible emphasis on 'equality before law', the mainstream agenda never questions the hierarchical relationship between the sexes, and it remains the debates apart from economic targeting untouched.

In almost all studies about women's problems, it has been argued that further education improves women's employability in labor market. Although we do see the justification of this argument, we confirmed its imperfection in several terms.

In the "Labor Force Participation by Educational Level" sub-section, it was acknowledged that the gap in labor force participation rates between sexes substantially reduces only at the university level in Turkey. It was also seen that the male labor force participation rates are high except the category of the illiterate, and there is no significant differential due to different educational levels. Without questioning why further education is not the panacea for men, a permanent solution to gender inequality can not be introduced.

The general argument concerning the positive effect of education on employability is also incomplete in terms of the agricultural and non-agricultural sector. It was observed that further education improves the female employability in the non-agricultural sector, whereas no positive effect on female employability is perceived in the agricultural sector which is the sector employing the most women.

Another important matter to be questioned to complete this argument of the positive effects of education is whether further education helps women break the conventional sexual division of labor, and participate in labor market with different tasks from the ones that are seen as fit women well.

For this aim, the distribution of 2006-07 academic year graduates by their fields of study was investigated. We met very interesting outcomes. It was seen that there exists gender stratification in terms of the fields of study at university. Women participate more in service and labor intensive fields than in the high tech ones, and their preferences for fields of study do not contradict the conventional sexual division of labor. It was acknowledged that the endeavor to provide the compatibility with the responsibilities that are expected from women in the private sphere, highly affects the preferences of women about their careers. We want to re-emphasize the most interesting points.

It was promising to observe that female graduates account for almost half of all the graduates in Medicine, which has been historically known as a male-dominated discipline. However, when a deeper study concerning the distribution of Medical graduates by areas of specialization was carried out, the existence of gender stratification of preferences in this discipline was also confirmed. We observed that female physicians are concentrated in certain areas of specialization, namely Dermatology, Thoracic Diseases, Psychiatry, Child Health and Diseases, Basic Medical Sciences, Public Health, and Internal Medicine, where the on call duties and night shifts are relatively rare, flexible working hours are available, the re-entry after taking time-off is easier in terms of professional adjustment, in order to supply the compatibility with family responsibilities. It was also seen that the participation of female physicians is very low in all sub-disciplines of Surgery, which itself has been given more importance in academic circles and among the people.

The fact that female graduates account for the half of the total graduates in the discipline of Law, which has also been a highly male dominated discipline, seem to indicate an ostensible break in the male dominated course of this discipline. However, it was seen that female lawyers constitute 36.8% of the total lawyers who are registered in the Union of Turkish Bar Associations in 2008. Furthermore, according to the October 2007 findings, only 28.9% of all judges, and 5.62% of all prosecutors are women.

The discipline of Engineering has also been known to have a male dominant character all over the world. In this discipline, female graduates are mainly concentrated in the sub-disciplines of Food, Chemical, Textile, and

Environment, each of which can be associated with women's conventional roles. It was observed that the shares of female graduates in more technical disciplines, namely Aircraft, Mechanical, Civil, Mining, Computer, and Geology are considerably low.

The main point of including "Employment" chapter was to introduce the poor employment creation performance of the Turkish governments in general; and to examine the composition of the current employment by gender in the labor market and consequently to see how women do within the market mechanism in particular. We observed that the female employment promotion in the non-agricultural sector has been inadequate to compensate the decline in female employment in the agricultural sector. Service sector has been the main sector that absorbs most of the increasing female labor force. However, it was seen that female employment in the service sector, regardless of the educational levels of the employees, is concentrated rather in labor intensive sub-sectors of 'community, social and personal services' and 'wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants'.

We demonstrated the existence of gender discrimination in the promotion process in terms of lower participation of women in senior managerial staff compared to male with the same or even less educational level in both public and private sector. It was confirmed that men are employed in top managements at any level of education, while women have to be more highly educated than men for the same positions. In this case, the importance of education for women to increase their employability in better positions can be emphasized. However, if the ultimate aim is to secure prevalent gender equality, the basic matter to be questioned is why having a higher educational level is not a necessity for men to have a more decent work.

We argue for decent work for all, and give special emphasis to the promotion of decent work and full employment for its effects in terms of the improvement of women's both social and economic conditions. We argued in many ways that as long as Turkish governments give the priority to inflation rather than the unemployment, full employment and decent work for all cannot be achieved. In this context, we call for the immediate adoption of a national



employment strategy for all which addresses the gender bias character of the labor market.

The international agendas (i.e. the supra-national agencies such as IMF and World Bank), and bourgeois feminists emphasize the need for further female participation in the labor market; however they rarely refer to the high unemployment problem, precarious circumstances in the labor market, or its highly unequal structure. The international official agendas do not accept the responsibility for the structural problems within labor market; they consider them rather as a matter of individual incompetence or improper policy implementations of the local governments. The official agendas mainly present training programs specific to women to have increasing numbers of women more productively in labor market. We argue the narrow scope of the line of thought of the mainstream agencies about women and their problems; and emphasize the need for a national employment strategy with a more comprehensive approach effect of which will be able to be perceived within all kind of policy implementation.

In this context, it was of significant importance to show the extent of the unemployment problem, especially among the university graduates. Thus, we expect the mainstream agendas and bourgeois feminists to question the adequacy and comprehensiveness of their action plans for women from any strata of the society.

For this aim, in the chapter entitled “Unemployment”, it was shown that the unemployment problem has reached far more serious sizes for both women and men than the official agenda declares. We confirmed that the overall unemployment rate for university graduates is higher than the total unemployment rate. It was also acknowledged that the unemployment rate for female graduates is twice as much as the rate for male university graduates in both urban and rural areas. The lowest female unemployment rate by educational level was found to be the one for the illiterate women for both urban and rural areas.

In the context of the high unemployment, the job placement performance of the Turkish Employment Organization (ISKUR) was investigated in the fifth chapter entitled “The Informal Employment”. We confirmed that registered

unemployed persons with higher educational level have no advantage in job placement. On the contrary, it was seen that women and persons with higher educational level are less likely to be placed in a job by ISKUR. More than half of the total persons who were placed in a job by ISKUR had an educational level below high school, whilst the share of persons with a higher educational degree than high school and its equivalents in job placement stayed below 10.0% in 2007. It was also confirmed that the majority of female registered persons who are unemployed for more than a year are high school graduates, whereas it is the primary school graduates that constitute the bulk of male registered unemployed waiting for more than a year.

We emphasized via many examples that educating women has meant having more women to be employed in labor market more productively by the mainstream agenda. Existing solution proposals, namely educating women and increasing participation in labor market, seem to give the idea of ‘something being done’ and that ‘women’s position has been changing for better’, while at the same time ensuring the continuation of existing inequalities. We conclude that in any case, more women in work force do not raise quality of women’s lives; it may lower them. Nor does wage earning necessarily bring women respect etc. in an outside of the home. Most importantly, it is seen that education does not lead to a more fair distribution of means of production, or time, or wages, or responsibilities in the private sphere. And educated women do not seem to exceed their social roles in the labor market. Furthermore, we argue that education has any meaning only within a particular social system. Women and men are being educated accordingly with the dominant system of thoughts and ‘appropriate’ behaviors to provide the continuation of the system. In practice, education has been one of the main institutions in Turkey that serve the continuity of gender inequality, as well.

The last thing that the author desires is to cause a misperception pertaining to that women are passive. Women themselves internalized the values of governments and liberal feminists. They should realize that accepting the conventional roles is not a necessity. However, we need to undertake the risks of our opposition together. Because we are also aware of the individual cost of this opposition may be too heavy to bear for the lower class women. Thus, women

and men should organize starting from neighborhood to country-wide in order to share both the burden and achievements of this struggle. The influences of the sexual division of labor restrict men's lives, as well. In this context, the endeavours for eliminating the conventional sexual division of labor is related to question in what kind of a world we want to live.

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