

WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WHITE COLLAR LESBIANS
AND GAYS AND THEIR COPING STRATEGIES:
A CASE STUDY FROM ANKARA,
TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores workplace sexual orientation discrimination in Turkey. The discrimination and harassment experiences of white collar lesbian and gay individuals at the work place, the results of these negative experiences and how they cope with these are discussed in this thesis. In this thesis, I analyze the existing theoretical literature of sexual orientation discrimination and evaluate their relevance in a developing country, such as Turkey, where traditional and cultural beliefs and norms are still prevalent. The presence of sexual orientation discrimination put forth through interviews held with white collar lesbians and gays. Gays and lesbians, who experience discrimination at different levels and in different work environments, try to vitiate the effect of this treatment by using various strategies, such as hiding their sexual orientation by fabricating a lover or appearing to be asexual, quitting, ghettoization. On the contrary, they may choose to protect their self-integrity and reveal their sexual orientation, thereby becoming implicitly or explicitly out. Work place safety, self-integration and the degree of being in compliance with gender norms are the key determinants in the decisions of lesbians and gays regarding the strategies and there is fluidity between all strategies.

Keywords: Discrimination, Workplace, Sexual Orientation, Coping Strategies

ÖZ

BEYAZ YAKALI LEZBİYEN VE GEY BİREYLERİN İŞ YAŞAMINDA YAŞADIKLARI AYRIMCILIKLAR VE MÜCADELE STRATEJİLERİ: ANKARA'DAN BİR VAKA ÇALIŞMASI, TÜRKİYE

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Bu tez, Türkiye’de işyeri cinsel yönelim ayrımcılığını araştırmaktadır. Beyaz yakalı işlerde çalışan lezbiyen ve gey bireylerin işyerinde yaşadıkları ayrımcılık ve taciz deneyimleri, bu olumsuz deneyimlerin sonuçları ve onlarla nasıl başa çıktıkları bu tezde tartışılacaktır. Bu çalışmada, cinsel yönelime dayalı ayrımcılık konusunda varolan teorik çalışmalar değerlendirilip geçerlilikleri, gelişmekte olan ve geleneklerin hâkim olduğu bir ülke olan Türkiye için analiz edilmektedir. İş yerinde cinsel yönelim ayrımcılığının varlığı beyaz yakalı lezbiyen ve geyler ile yapılan görüşmeler üzerinden ortaya konmuştur. Farklı düzeylerde ve farklı iş ortamlarında ayrımcılık yaşayan lezbiyen ve geyler, karşı cins ile gerçekte olmayan bir ilişki kurgulamak veya asexual görünmek gibi bazı yollarla cinsel eğilimlerini gizleme, işi bırakma, gettolaşma gibi bazı stratejilerden yararlanarak, bu muamelenin etkilerini azaltmak için çaba gösterirler. Bunun tersine, kendi bütünlüklerini korumayı seçerek, üstü kapalı olarak veya bariz bir şekilde cinsel kimliklerini açıklamayı da tercih edebilirler. Bu stratejilere ilişkin kararları belirleyen etkenler, işyerinin güvenli olma derecesi, kendi bütünlükleri ve toplumsal cinsiyet normlarıyla uyumlu olma dereceleridir. Ayrıca tüm stratejiler arasında bir akışkanlık vardır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ayrımcılık, İşyeri, Cinsel Yönelim, Başa Çıkma Stratejileri

To My Family,

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

“All human beings are born free and with equal dignity and rights”

Those are the first words in the first article of the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Even though it was adopted in 1948, there are still significantly large groups of people who have not yet been granted equal dignity and rights. One group is composed of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. It is a fundamental human right to live, work and love in accordance with your true identity. However, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) people do not fully enjoy these rights, particularly their right to employment. Discrimination at work place on the grounds of sexual orientation is a major and increasing problem throughout the world. While most European countries have anti-discrimination legislation, nevertheless many provide little, not sufficient or no protection for gays, lesbians and bisexuals.

Homophobic discrimination and harassment, even to the extent of violence, at work place is widespread in the world. For the lesbian and gay employees who are ‘out’ or suspicious in terms of sexual orientation, the risk of discriminatory treatment that is high. Negative behaviors directed at lesbians and gay men may have a very real impact on their ability to find employment and their potential for promotion. The negative work environment sourced from homophobic understanding, can lead to some psychological effects and negative results such as depression, stress-related illnesses, and even suicide on lesbians and gays. Some of the lesbian and gay employees use certain ‘coping strategies’ in order to fight against the encountered

and anticipated discrimination that causes such negative situations. Some of them use some vocational based coping strategies like isolation and resigning. Some of the lesbian and gay employees choose to act in compliance with appropriate gender aspects that are based on accepted norms in society or choose to avoid conversations which may bring their sexual orientation to mind in order to remain hidden at work (Griffin, 1992; Woods, 1993, Clair et al. 2005). Thus, gays, lesbians and bisexuals are often invisible in the workplace either by their own choice as a safety precaution or because their colleagues do not want to recognize their existence. In other words, gay and lesbian workers often remain silent about their orientation through the fear of negative or homophobic responses that can be blaming or minimizing (Smith and Ingram, 2004). Nevertheless there is a price attached to their silence. The effort it takes to hide one's identity and not be oneself, for the sake of job security, has the effect of undermining one's self-confidence, which is important in any work environment, and ultimately, affecting work performance. Those who hide themselves may feel as if they are not authentic or may use up the energy that they would have invested in their jobs as pretending to be something that they are not which is difficult and tiring. As a result of the hiding strategy, they may be regarded as not being team players, asocial, withdrawn or secretive. Others may choose to be honest about their lives in the form of being implicitly out or explicitly out (Griffin, 1992) for various reasons. According to Griffin (1992), the decision to hide or reveal made by lesbians and gays are based on the factors of 'self-integration' or 'degree of potentiality of discriminatory treatment' at the work place.

There is fair amount of literature on sexual orientation based discrimination against LGBT individuals as well as the literature on sexual orientation in general manner all over the world. The beginning is considered as the use of the word 'homosexual' in Germany in 1869" (Ertetik, 2010, p.2). Discrimination based on sexual orientation is mainly discussed in Western-based (Öztürk, 2011), particularly United States-based studies. In the United States today, the prevalent myth assumes that gays and lesbians, especially gay men, are affluent and that economic and personal problems related to work are not important issues for them (Badgett, 1999). In addition, most

Americans do not know that gay and lesbian people's rights to equal treatment at work are not currently protected at a national level (Human Rights Campaign, 1999c). There is a visibility problem for lesbian, gay and bisexual people in United States similar to the other western countries. The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) currently estimates that approximately 10% of its membership identifies itself as gay, lesbian, or bisexual in the United States. This shows that even in the Western countries there is an anticipation of discrimination among employees though there are some legislation protecting LGBT people from sexual orientation based discrimination. This situation has implications for families of LGBT individuals as well as has implications on themselves. In fact, from an ecological perspective (Van Soest & Bryant, 1995), "homophobia and heterosexism in the workplace do violence to the gay, lesbian and bisexual people directly affected as well as to their families and communities" (Anastas, 1998, p. 84). Finally, as Badgett (1997) states "...even in a modern market economy, work is a virtuous activity and is an important part of our economic foundation" (p. 383). Thus, attending the role of producer rather than consumer helps lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered people as a group to have a positive image in work life as well as in whole spheres of social life (Badgett, 1997).

Every element that is different from the norms based on certain values experiences discriminatory treatment in Turkey (Çayır & Ceyhan, 2012). Since moral and religious values are important (Kalaycıoğlu, 2007) and LGBT people are seen as non-compliant with these values, they experience negative treatment in Turkey (KaosGL, 2009). LGBT people in Turkey experience discriminatory treatment in different forms, such as harassment, ostracism, being fired or forced to resign and mobbing by various institutions, such as the state, the military, religion and the laws through a number of discourses. In Turkey, the 'sin discourse' by religion, the 'psychological discourse' by the state as well as by the military, and the 'general morality' discourse in the laws and regulations are recreated every day and every moment. In Turkey, the religion of Islam is one of the dominant institutions and it accepts homosexuality as a sin and forbids it (KaosGL, 2008). Also, certain media

institutions which adopt an Islamic point of view further increase this conviction. Selma Aliye Kavaf, who was Turkey's former Minister Responsible for Women and Family Affairs made a statement declaring that "homosexuality is an illness" in an interview with Hürriyet Newspaper¹. This statement shows how the state recreates a 'psychological discourse' which accepts homosexuality as a 'psychological disorder'. Furthermore, the regulations of the military have a number of articles which define homosexuality as a 'psychological disorder' that is based on the DSM II of APA (American Psychiatric Association) (Öz, 2011) and gays are not accepted into military service because of this regulation. According to Altınay (2011), Islamic groups' point of view may move from the 'sin discourse' to the 'psychological discourse' and sometimes these groups use both of these discourses (p. 56). Homosexuality is not an issue that is defined in the legislation in Turkey, with the exception of legislation related to the military and there is no law that forbids homosexuality or sexual orientation based discrimination (Öz, 2011). According to Öz (2011), in the absence of such legislation, some provisions in laws and regulations which refer to a 'general morality' discourse, based on a conservative approach where society sees homosexuality as an aberration, is frequently interpreted and used against homosexuality and LGBT people can be formally discriminated against due to this 'legal gap' (Öz, 2011).

Being a citizen is related to existing in the public sphere (Lister, 2002) which is associated with being a heterosexual man. Lesbians and gays, similar to all other sexual minorities, are seen as being related to being sexualized and to the private sphere and thus, their citizenship is a sexualized citizenship (Lister, 2002). In the other words, this is a status of being "less than citizens" (Ataman, 2011, p.128). For this reason, on such grounds, like the other sexual minority groups, lesbians and gays experience prejudicial and discriminatory treatment from their family, friends and the wider society (Ataman, 2011, p.138). Homophobic discriminatory treatment must be

¹ Retrieved from <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/pazar/14031207.asp> in August, 2011

fought against and the heteronormativity that causes this treatment must be challenged first of all by having a protective legislation.

However, there will not be a change towards openness and mutual respect unless awareness is raised by strategic work at every level of society. The responsibility to raise the issue lies not only with individuals, but also with employers, trade unions, policy-makers and political institutions. This thesis does not mainly aim to discuss the possible solutions; rather, this thesis mainly aims to ask the question: “How do white collar lesbian and gay individuals experience encountered and anticipated discrimination and what kind of coping strategies they use in work life in Turkey?”

In the following sections, I will talk over the ‘significance of this research’ and its ‘contribution’. After these discussions, in the chapters following the first chapter, I will discuss the ‘discrimination’ and ‘coping strategies’ experiences of the respondents, discuss the ‘methodology of this research’, and finally, the findings in the ‘conclusion’ chapter.

1.2. Significance

In Turkey, LGBT people are stigmatized as ‘immoral’, ‘perverted’, ‘ill’ and ‘abnormal’, all of which have negative meanings in society (Güner et al., 2011, p. 15). This stigmatization is further increased mainly in the media (Güner et al., 2011, p. 15), and by religion, the state and the military (Altınay, 2011). Since individuals are embedded in society, the point of view of people at the workplace is not independent from the point of view of these institutions that are very influential on society. Therefore, stigmatization also continues in work places and lesbians and gays experience discriminatory treatment in their work lives in Turkey.

Discrimination and violence against LGBT people is an international problem and occurs in most countries at different levels, as discussed in the ‘6th International Meeting Against Homophobia’ (KaosGL, 2011). Turkey is one of the countries

where discriminatory practices, harassment and violence against LGBT people are at a serious level (KaosGL, 2009). In Turkey, LGBT individuals have experiences of being detained, arrested, or forced to move from their place of residence or even cities simply because of their sexual orientation (Güner et al., 2011). There have also been hate crimes committed in Turkey (Öz, 2011). Other kinds of negative actions also occur in work places in Turkey. According to Doğan (2012), lesbians and gays experience formal and informal discriminatory treatment at the work place in Turkey. They are mostly fired or forced to resign from work and also experience other negative treatment, such as being subject to harassment at work. LGBT people do not remain passive when faced with this kind of treatment and they use some coping strategies at the work place; in Turkey, the most frequently utilized strategy is 'hiding' (KaosGL, 2009; Doğan, 2012).

This study is important in order to study and reveal the discriminatory treatment experiences of white collar lesbians and gays living in Turkey and the effects of this treatment on them. In addition, the aim of this study is to evaluate the coping strategies used by these individuals in a detailed manner and pave the way to new contributions for solutions to these issues.

This study has some contributions to literature along with its significance. In the following section I discuss its contribution.

1.3. Contribution

According to Öztürk (2011), academic studies on sexual orientation based work place discrimination is mostly on the experiences of LGBT people living in North America and Europe, such experiences of LGBT people living in 'other' regions such as Asia and the Middle East have only recently gained a conceptual or empirical interest. For this reason, this study will be a contribution to literature on LGBT individuals' challenges throughout their work life experiences in Turkey, which is one of the 'other' regions in Middle East for the mainstream academic research.

Unlike race, gender-based or other forms of discrimination, ‘sexual orientation based discrimination’ has not been defined in the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey. This is also a shortcoming in the regulations at workplaces.

Consequently, in Turkey, LGBT people experience more difficulties compared to a country in which there are some regulations to prevent discrimination against these and the recent literature addresses the issue of how to implement those regulations in the work places. Ozturk (2011) defines the first-wave and second-wave research agendas as:

The first-wave research program (where the apparent abuse of lesbian, gay and bisexual workers is the main issue in question), or the second-wave research agenda (in which lesbian, gay and bisexual employees are recognized in the public sphere and, as such, the implementation of these rights is the main emphasis of the research agenda) (Öztürk, 2011: 1101).

Based on these explanations, my study which is on experiences of discrimination and the coping strategies of white collar lesbian and gay employees in Turkey, will be a contribution to the first-wave research program.

After making a brief to my study and explaining the significance and contribution of this study, in the following section I provide the outline of what I am dealing with the following chapters in this study.

1.4 Outline

This thesis consists of four further chapters which are designed as follows.

Chapter 2 provides the methodology that is used in this study. In this chapter, in the first section I dealt with why I chosed feminist methodology and how I used it, in the second section I dealt with how I entered the field and description of the field, in the third section I dealt with descriptions of the participants, in the fourth section I

explained the interviewing process, in the fifth section I dealt with the data analysis process, in the sixth section I dealt with the limitations of this research and in the final section I explained my acquisitions.

Chapter 3 discusses the theoretical background on sexual orientation based discrimination and coping strategies.

Chapter 4 provides the sexual orientation based discrimination experiences of lesbian and gay employees. First I explained the formal and informal discrimination as a 'symbolic violence'. After that I dealt with how formal and informal discrimination experienced by lesbians and gay respondents and the forms of these two main categories of discrimination. Finally, I explained how psychological effects of discrimination are experienced in Turkey.

Chapter 5 provides the coping strategies that are used by lesbian and gay employees. First I dealt with the strategies in which lesbian and gay employees are hiding their sexuality. After that I dealt with the strategies in which lesbian and gay employees are revealing their sexual orientation based strategies. Then I dealt with the strategies for solidarity, strategies used during searching for a job, strategy of being hard working and finally strategy of being an agreeable person.

Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the study by providing a brief summary, contributions and suggestions for further researches that will fill the limitations of this research.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I discuss the research methodology that I have used for my thesis. In the first section, I have clarified my reasons for choosing feminist methodology. In the second section, I then described the field with its characteristics and the participants in terms of their age, education and occupation. In the third, while describing the field, I have dealt with the methods that I used for implementation of my research methodology. In the subsequent fourth section, I have specified the interviewing process in terms of question types, location, and similar factors. In the same section, I discussed the importance of making observations during my field study and then shared my observations. In the fifth, I have dealt with the data analysis process that I have followed for my thesis. In the following sixth section, I set out the limitations that affected and determined the framework of my research. In the final section, I have discussed the conclusions that I have reached while carrying out the research and my personal transformation as a result of dealing with this project.

In the following sections, I discuss my methodology, the field and provide more detailed information on the work carried out for research. In the sections “Why a Feminist Methodology?” and “Entering the Field and Description of the Field”, I discuss my methodology and the field. I provide discuss the work carried out for research in greater detail in “Description of the Participants”, “Interviewing Process”, “Analysis”, “Limitations” and “Acquisitions”.

2.1. Why a Feminist Methodology?

A feminist scholar should speak out on the experiences born from reality. As Roth and Hartman (1999) argue, second generation feminist researcher/activists’

standpoint was different from observer/expert ones and their knowledge was also different from the “spectator knowledge”. They carried out their research for “women’s liberation” and in order to use this research for women. They defended the approach of “speaking out” against “speaking for”. This research has the second generation feminist researcher/activists’ standpoint and would like to speak out on lesbian and gay individuals’ experiences instead of speaking for them. In other words, this research has a dual vision of feminist policy. Roth and Hartman (1999) embrace the “dual vision of feminist policy research” as “establishing a research agenda that fulfills the standards of positivist social science while addressing the feminist aims of conducting research not merely on women, but for women. Whereas this research makes use of mainstream methods in the social sciences, it also investigates, from the critical viewpoint of feminism.

The data on discrimination and harassment against women, LGBT individuals and other oppressed groups can be collected through feminist method, which is obtaining knowledge directly by listening to the respondents who are experiencing these negative treatments. We are living in a patriarchal culture all over the world and, thus, the knowledge that we can reach is based on a ‘patriarchal heritage’. Christiansen-Ruffman (1998) defines ‘patriarchal heritage’ as “a historical or socially reproduced assumption of male authoritative control of knowledge, power and resources.” In order to reach ‘real’ knowledge, we need to use the feminist method and methodology.

Harding (1987) defines ‘feminist epistemology’ as answering the question “who can be a knower?” with respect to theory of knowledge and her conceptualizations of ‘research method’ and ‘feminist methodology’ are based on this epistemology. She defines the research method as “techniques for gathering evidence” and she categorizes these techniques into the three steps of listening to the respondents, observing their behavior and examining historical backgrounds, data and records. According to Harding (1987) feminist method uses these steps that male dominated researchers

have utilized. She emphasizes that feminist researchers listen and observe the worklife experiences of women regardfully. Harding (1987) also mentions that feminist method, methodology and epistemology overreach the 'additive approaches' that deal with women issues in an additive manner. In my research, I mainly used the first two steps of research method referred to by Harding (1987) in the light of feminist research method approach that she mentioned. Even so, there is an unclarity on definition of feminist research method on how it differs from the former patriarchal research method as Harding (1987) points out.

Feminist researchers use all the formerly used methods, but how they employ these traditional research techniques and these methods of gathering and processing data is new and strikingly different. They listen carefully to how respondents think about their experiences. They observe the behavior of women and men that traditional social scientists have not considered to be significant. They seek new and unrecognized patterns in the data.

In order to understand the participation of white collar lesbian and gay employees in work life, I have chosen to conduct research from a feminist point of view, and listen to the life experiences of lesbian and gay individuals and filter this data employing the feminist method. For this reason, qualitative research methodology through in-depth interviews is used in this research.

After explaining why 'feminist methodology' is used in this research, in the following section, "Entering the Field and Description of the Field", I provide a brief introduction and description of the field.

2.2. Entering the Field and Description of the Field

Generally, the researcher's own concerns help herself/himself to choose the research topic for social matters. I had this social concern and curiosity to start this research. However, I decided to do research on the work experiences of lesbian and gay people due to the influence of another artistic project that I have conducted. I am a photographer and I opened my last exhibition named "TransLife" about the problem of 'discrimination against transgender individuals in work life' in Turkey within the scope of the 15th International Flying Broom Film Festival in 2012 in Ankara. With this organization, which attracted the LBGT members interest and meeting them was a massive change for me.

Many lesbian and gay came to see my exhibition and wanted to meet me. After I had met them, I started to have some friends, learn about their problems and the way that they cope with these problems. I had focused on exclusion of transgender people in work life in Turkey because I had thought that they become sex workers compulsorily² and their problems carry more urgency and should be a priority among the problems of people from other sexual orientations. With the aid of these meetings during the exhibition, I entered their community spontaneously, and in time, I found out that lesbian and gay people have very serious problems at work life at different degrees. After a while, I made a decision to carry out research on discrimination against these problems of gay and lesbian people living in Turkey for my thesis. This time, I tried to attract the interest of people, not with photographs, but through my words and thoughts. In my opinion, people must use their power to point out, influence or maybe to change the course of life. As an outsider, I just wanted to make the LGBT members hidden problems visible to create an environment of awareness about these problems and an incentive for possible solutions.

²Some of transgender people choose to be a sex worker as their preference. This is similar for heterosexual female and male sex workers. However, if a large amount of a group containing university or master graduates, having a distinct sexual orientation are working as sex workers, this indicates directly that there is an exclusion and rejection at work life for them. I also wrote a field research with transgender people for a term paper for METU in 2010 and I reached the same conclusion.

I started to try reaching LGBT members, but as I mentioned within this research, heterosexism, which is the dominant manner in our society, supposes every citizen is heterosexual and opposite sex relationship (the relationship between the man and woman) is the only type of relationship that is accepted as 'normal'. Because of the high risk of facing discrimination and exclusion from most of the life areas during their socialization, LGBT members mostly choose to be hidden and isolated from the society. For this reason, I used a 'snowball method' to reach the participants. My starting point for reaching the respondents was the visitors of my photograph exhibition. I explained to them the main focus of my research and its relation to my photograph project. We planned an in-depth interview for another time. Then, I conducted the interviews with them. They gave references to who were their lesbian and gay friends. By this way, I reached most of my respondents.

I had thought that LGBT NGOs would have helped me to contact to the new respondents. However, they said that the LGBT people within their circle were tired of the interviews that had been carried out for the former projects, and consequently, they had started to feel "like an agency for finding LGBT individuals for the projects". As a result, they did not direct me to new respondents. I had a similar experience with LGBT NGOs when searching for transgender people who will perform in my photograph project "TransLife". For this reason, I was not surprised and disappointed and I said to myself: "I believe in my own reason and good feelings for doing this research and believe in the significance of this research as a step to have a more democratic land where sexual minorities have big troubles in work life experiences etc." With these kinds of motivations, I kept on searching for new respondents and I found new ones who in time believed in my research. One of the experts working in a LGBT NGO and who is a lesbian gave an interview.

I convinced the advocate of another LGBT NGO, Güney³, by giving a reference from a known LGBT activist and writer whom LGBT people trust and whom I also interviewed and used “Cenk” as a nickname for him in the research. Güney helped me meet with people who had been fired from their jobs and he had directly or indirectly been a part of their processes. Yet still I could not reach enough number of lesbian respondents that my advisor expected. Güney suggested that I send an e-mail explaining my concern to the group mail address of their LGBT NGO. I sent an email and Selin, one of the members, replied to me saying that she is working in a gallery and would like to have an interview with me.

I also tried to use my personal relationships to reach the respondents. Ferhat, who is an engineer in the telecommunications industry, was a friend from work life with whom I used to come across often, eat and drink something together sometimes in the same café place where was close to my and his workplaces. Since we have similar understanding of life in terms of the feminist standpoint, sensitivity to the problems of all minorities and empathy towards similar discriminatory practices that we experienced at work, we have become close friends in a limited time. We introduced our colleagues from our own companies to each other and have met outside several times. One day, I mentioned to him the topic of my thesis. Since the company I have been working is a conservative and male dominated environment as a company in telecommunication industry, it was hard for me to share the topic of my thesis because of fear of being exposed to homophobia and being suspected of being a lesbian from the viewpoint of other people at work. I thought that I may lose my job because of the topic of my thesis because I am a single heterosexual woman and it is easy for people to think about me that I may a lesbian. Nonetheless, I think because

³ This name and the subsequent names are pseudonyms I used in order to protect the identity of the respondents. Pseudonyms helped me to collect data and to persuade the respondents to hold an interview. Bragg (2011), in order to preserve the confidentiality of his respondents, had used a pseudonym for the original name of the hospital in the study I mentioned above. Nonetheless, he had preferred a pseudonym which is related with the characterization of the related local area. I used pseudonyms in order to hide the real identities of my respondents and taking an inspiration from Bragg's approach, I preferred to choose pseudonyms expressing their early life backgrounds. In the other words, I thought about what other name those families would have named their children who are my respondents.

of being close to LGBT people for a while, I could have had a ‘gaydar’⁴ ability and I guessed that Ferhat is a gay man. “Homosexual people tend to be more sex atypical than heterosexual in some behavior, feelings, and interests.” (Rieger et al, 2008).

Ferhat has a refined way of speaking and is not interested in football as most of other guys at the workplace were interested in. Instead, he was interested in volleyball, figure skating, theatre, literature and feminism. He also was not trying to oppress women and his close friends were mostly women. He used to go to a fitness club regularly and used to use day-care materials for his face every day. These aspects were very different from the aspects of a heterosexual man, so it was not hard for me to find out his sexual orientation. It may be rude to directly ask a person her/his sexual orientation. It is like asking a person whether she/he has a lover or asking the story of her/his divorce. However, may be since I believed my friendly intention while asking, I didn’t hesitate to ask. Also, we trusted each other and both of us could hide our secrets at work and so he would not tell anyone the topic of my thesis. First of all, I talked him about the topic of my exhibition and the LGBT issues through it. After two weeks one day, when we are alone in our room at work, I asked him as “Are you gay?” He answered as “Yes... actually I would like to disclose to you since you are working on LGBT issues.” After this dialogue, we had an interview and became better friends. I also had an opportunity to observe him at close range in the natural flow of our daily work life (through his reports and his dialogues with his colleagues during our meetings in the café place).

I interviewed eight lesbian and twelve gay respondents who are working as white collar workers in different companies and jobs in Turkey. I first talked with the respondents who attended my project named “TransLife”. Then, by the help of the snowball sampling technique, I reached these respondents. I generally talked with the people I only knew as friends of friends. The interviews were conducted between May 2012 and March 2013. The lengths of the conversations were from 40 minutes to 360 minutes.

⁴ “Gaydar is the ability to distinguish homosexual and heterosexual people using indirect cues.” (Rieger et al., 2008)

In this section I provide the information about entering the field and description of the field and in the following section I present the description of my respondents that I met in the field.

2.3. Description of the Participants

I carried out a qualitative research with 20 respondents. Lots of the respondents were reached through snowball sampling. I interviewed eight lesbian and twelve gay respondents working in white collar jobs in Turkey. I tried to choose white collar jobs because I thought that the experiences of these workers might be more interesting because they had more power and respect in their companies and probably their company needed their performance. The respondent at the minimum age was 25 years old and the respondent at the maximum age was 39 years old among the gay respondents. The respondent at the minimum age was 29 years old and the respondent at the maximum age was 39 years old among the lesbian respondents. One of the lesbians didn't want to disclose her identity. She seemed to be at the age of 25 - 30. Three of the lesbian respondents and four of the gay respondents had graduate degrees (having master or PhD degree or being a master or PhD student). Only one of the lesbian respondents and two of the gay respondents were working in the public sector. The rest of them were working in private sector.

Table 1. Demographic Features of Lesbian Respondents

DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES of LESBIAN RESPONDENTS				
Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation (from the Current to the Eldest)
Asiye	30	Female	Bachelor Degree in Economic and Administrative Sciences Graduate Degree in Economic and Administrative Sciences (Continues)	Translator in a Professional Association Expert in an NGO
Esra	38	Female	Bachelor Degree in Engineering	Technical Team Manager in an University Project Manager in a Nationalist Media Firm Software Engineer
Ayşegül	31	Female	Bachelor Degree in the Social Sciences	Manager in an Education Consultancy Firm Expert in a LGBT NGO Cost Controller Dish Washer
Derya	38	Female	Bachelor Degree in Law	Advocate in a Company and a LGBT NGO Advocate in Law Offices
Elçin	20 - 30	Female	High School Degree	Expert in a LGBT NGO Manager in a Gay Pub Senior Waitor
Selin	33	Female	Bachelor Degree in Communication Graduate Degree in Communication (Continues)	Responsible in an Art Gallery Journalist in Independent Media Journalist in Mainstream Media
Zeynep	29	Female	Bachelor and Graduate Degree in the Social Sciences PHD Degree in the Social Sciences (Continues)	Research Assistant in a University
Sevgi	39	Female	Bachelor Degree from Education Faculty	Teacher in Public

Table 2. Demographic Features of Gay Respondents

DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES of GAY RESPONDENTS				
Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Education	Occupation (from the Current to the Eldest)
Bora	32	Male	Bachelor and Graduate Degree in the Social Sciences PHD Degree in Political Science	Academician in a University
Halil İbrahim Dinçdağ	35	Male	High School Degree	Football Referee Radio & TV Program Maker and Anouncer
Cenk	32	Male	Bachelor Degree in Law	Expert in a Professional Association Expert in Labour Union Research Assistant in a University
Çetin	33	Male	Bachelor Degree in Economic and Administrative Sciences	Bank Employer
Devrim	20 - 25	Male	Bachelor Degree in Economic and Administrative Sciences	Expert in a Professional Association
Ferhat	32	Male	Bachelor Degree in Engineering	Engineer in Telecommunication Industry
Güney	35	Male	Bachelor Degree in Law	Advocate in his Law Office and a LGBT NGO
İrfan	28	Male	Bachelor Degree in Engineering Graduate Degree in Social Sciences PHD Degree in Engineering	Research Assistant in the Social Science Research Assistant in the Engineering
İsmail	28	Male	Licence Degree in Arts and Sciences Graduate Degree in Social Sciences PHD Degree in Social Sciences	Research Assistant in a University
Karatay	39	Male	Associate Degree in Fashion	Fashion Designer
Rıdvan	28	Male	Bachelor Degree in Economic and Administrative Sciences Graduate Degree in Economic and Administrative Sciences	Public Information Manager Research Assistant in Field Projects
Erdal	28	Male	Bachelor Degree in Law	Cashier in a Bookstore Intern Lawyer

2.4. Interviewing Process

The questions were easy to ask and understand and I didn't force the respondents to answer all of them. However, I just asked new questions about the same topic when the answer was not enough or sometimes I explained what I meant with discrimination if it was required. Interviews proceeded as conversations. I constituted my questions under five categories. These categories are;

- Demographic features of the respondents
- Early life experiences of the respondents
- Aspects of being a lesbian or gay in Turkey
- Discrimination experiences of the respondents in daily and work life
- Disclosure experiences of the respondents in daily and work life
- Strategies they develop to cope with the discrimination they face in the workplace

I realized that individuals talked about the affirmative behaviors that they experienced more willingly. I did not need to ask questions about the good experiences. However, while talking about negative behavior, there was need to get more detailed responses. So I added some "what" and "how" questions after the questions that might have 'killing' answers for the respondents. This method created more data for analyses.

After reading the article of Bragg (2011), which basically discusses the decision making processes and effects of disclosing at the work place, grounding on disclosing experiences of four social workers working at an hospital, taking into account their features of educational, familial and moral convictions, I understood the importance of asking about the early life experiences of the respondents in more detail. Therefore, for instance I asked the aspects of the environments and people around them in where they had brought up in terms of approach to sexuality, conservatism etc. After reading this article for my research, I became more careful

when the respondents were talking about these issues. Thus, this article became very influential for my thesis.

The conversations were conducted in coffees and parks, except for one interview which I had through Skype program via internet with one of my lesbian respondents, Derya, since she is a busy woman who is an activist, writer and, along with all these works, she has a busy job as a company advocate; I held rest of the interviews as face to face. It was hard to talk about these issues in the public area, especially lesbian respondents were anxious about whether the people around us listening to us or not. When I was making an interview with Zeynep, a research assistant in the Social Sciences in a university, a waiter was listening to us very carefully, sitting to the next table to hear us. So I made a warning to him. This was one of the most unpleasant experiences that I had while doing my research. So I chose to invite some of the respondents to my home if I felt that the respondent had been worried about the interview. But sometimes meeting at home was not enough to overcome the stress for the respondents and one of the gay respondents, İrfan, who had asked me to erase his voice record, brought a bottle of wine to be comfortable while talking.

After providing information about the field and the features of the respondents, in the following section, I tackle with the “Analysis” process carried out in this study.

2.5. Analysis

The main aim of this research is to analyze LGBT members' experiences and create some possibilities for them to be understood. While making this research and analyzing the data, I tried to classify the experiences, grouped these, and listed them in groups by using the theoretical information that I had given in my thesis.

There are various kinds of ways in which researchers can approach data collecting and data analysis processes and the raw data can be in a variety of forms, including survey responses, observations and the other forms. Following Harding (1987), I took the respondents as real ‘knowers’ and observation of their behavior was a

significant source for my research. I found a chance to observe only one of my respondents, Ferhat, since we used to meet in the same café place which is close to our workplaces of each other during break times. Although it has a subjective structure, observation is a method of data collection, and for our research, it is a vital way to collect data (Lewis, Michael, 1995). But as it known, it is easy to manipulate the collected data during the analysis phase to reach the wanted conclusions. For this reason, in the context of my observations on Ferhat's discrimination experiences at work, I critically thought through the data collection and data analyses phases to minimize the manipulation effect of the observation process.

In this section I have provided information about how I realized data analysis based on feminist methods. In the following section, I discuss the "Limitations" of this study.

2.6. Limitations

My research had some limitations. I used to live in İstanbul. In order to study Gender and Studies master program at METU, I quit my job and moved to Ankara from İstanbul. My environment was basically in İstanbul. For this reason, it was hard for me to settle a new environment in Ankara. Opening an exhibition helped me to reach lesbian and gay workers, and additionally, my sympathetic and friendly manners were effective to gain the trust of new respondents to persuade the respondents to talk with me about their private lives to overcome the situation of not having an environment. I also made them understand that I speak out, not speak for them. I underlined my own experiences as a heterosexual woman in my own work life, and tried to show them that we were in the same 'ship' and the main resource of those problems is the male dominated system.

In addition, it was hard to persuade the respondents who are working in public sector because the degree of consequences of homophobia is directly and harshly experienced and homosexual employees can be fired directly with the reason of

articles concerning 'morality' or 'disgraceful offense'. Particularly for the jobs which have a masculine nature, the degree of homophobia is higher in public sector and although I reached some gay employees from military and law enforcement agency using the snowball technique, they did not accept an interview since they do not want to have a problem with the government or were afraid of that their judicial processes would be influenced. One of the respondents from the public sector who accepted to interview with me was a teacher and others worked at universities. It was harder for me to reach lesbian professionals since lesbians are invisible in all spheres in the society and they were more afraid about an interview. Because of this limitation, data collecting period took a longer time than I had planned, since I was challenged so much to reach lesbian respondents.

The other limitation was that I reached people from similar work areas and that had a similar understanding of life, since I had to use the snowball method to reach the respondents. The number of the respondents, who are working in academics, having a social science background, is high. However, the respondents from different jobs, such as a fashion designer, bank clerk, football referee, and engineer made this research more comprehensive and thereby, contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the problem in Turkey.

Additionally, I had some difficulties in the voice recordings period. Some of the respondents preferred that I not record some comments. One of the gay respondents wanted me to erase the voice record after deciphering. He was anxious that his parents would be aware of his sexual orientation. So I had to write the comments on my computer and this made it difficult to keep the conversation mood of the interview.

The question that was difficult to obtain an answer to was "Have you ever experienced discrimination at the work place?" I think the reason for this is that most of the white collar employees internalize discrimination, especially indirect discrimination, since they accept work life is unfair, and in order to stay at that job,

they should endure these negative attitudes. In time, they had lost their awareness. Thus, after asking specific questions, they answered my questions.

Most of the respondents were talkative, friendly and seemed to enjoy telling their personal experiences to me (only some parts of the experience). Some of them said that they have not thought about these issues before and the questions made them think; sometimes, we waited for a while or gave a coffee break in order to give the respondents time to think. But at that point, another limitation was formed again. Some of the respondents got bored in a very short time with the reason of not having enough time or giving this kind of interviews so often. While this kind of situations sometimes decreased the quality of the conversation, sometimes the respondents stopped me and summarized all the discrimination experiences as a full-fledged story and this made my interviewing process more efficient and shorter.

Interviews were semi-structured. During the interviewing period, my awareness about white collar lesbian and gay individuals' life and workplace experiences was enhanced. For this reason, I have canceled some of the questions and I have added some new ones in time. The need of making changes to the questions brought some limitations about collecting and analyzing phases of the research.

My heterosexual and artist identities were both a limitation for me in the interviewing period. Because of my heterosexual identity, some of the respondents had prejudgments about me in terms of thinking that I would have homophobic ideas, I would not know their culture, even that I needed training about LGBT issues and homophobia. I experienced this kind of prejudgment during the interview with one of the lesbian respondents, Elçin, who is working in a LGBT NGO as an expert. In one of my questions, I had used the term 'homosexual' since the term is used as such in literature in English. However, in Turkish, its meaning is understood as a homophobic term. She reacted to this question since 'homosexuality' is used as a

biological term⁵ referring to the “homosexuality is an illness” discourse. I was aware of this discourse in Turkey, but because of the time limitation, I had directly translated the question from English. After this incident, I changed this question and used ‘lesbian and gay workers’ instead and tried to be more careful of my statements, not forgetting that language is an ideological tool and it can recreate the sexist and homophobic perceptions. I think, it would not be accurate to for anyone to say that “I am completely purified from sexism, or homophobia or ethnocentrism, class based prejudgments when evaluating people.” However, that person knew how much I worked for the “TransLife” project and my comments in the interview that I gave for their NGOs magazine. It might be because of my sexual orientation and their disappointment with the other artists who had gotten their help and then even did not even call them back (Öner, 2010)⁶.

During the conversations, I sometimes identified my sexual orientation. Sometimes, I was asked and sometimes I needed to refer to it. One of the reasons for this was to set aside any questionable state regarding my sexual orientation. Zimmerman argues that people try to analyze the gender of the person with whom they come across; he discusses this through an example of meeting a transgender sales clerk (1987). My point of departure being the argument put forth in this article, I sometimes felt that they were trying to analyze my sexual orientation and I came over this questionable situation by talking about my boyfriend. The other reason of disclosing my heterosexual identity was to give a message frankly that “Yes, I am a heterosexual and I am doing this research”, in order not to benefit from the question situation in terms of my sexual orientation, since I knew that if I were a homosexual person, I would not experience the prejudgments that I experienced. I chose to be honest about that.

⁵ DSM-4 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) of the American Psychiatric Association’ accepts homosexuality as an illness, and so, in Turkey homosexuals are not accepted to military services.

⁶ “Art as a Sphere of Anti-Homophobia and Artist-Phobic Practices”, retrieved from <http://www.kaosgl.com/sayfa.php?id=5691> in June 18, 2013.

I also was careful about my physical movements so as not to humiliate the respondents and to avoid senseless stigmatization (Scheyett, 2007). For example, while talking with a lesbian respondent, I was careful not to fix my skirt or shirt, because movements like that might send homophobic signals to the respondents, since I knew that these behaviors are the most annoying and most frequently done when a lesbian comes out. This kind of movements might disturb LGBT members as they are only recognized for their sexual identity, instead of their total personality since those behaviors refers to the stigmas in peoples' minds, such as sex addicts and perverts. This was a limitation for me because I was a heterosexual and because of the possible prejudgments, I needed to be more careful not to introduce myself in the wrong way and I was uncomfortable at times.

Because of my artist identity, I had experienced some negative attitudes. However, I was an insightful person because of having carried out a project on transsexuals. Some other respondents were attracted by my artist identity and accepted the interview. Nonetheless, as I have experienced in my daily life, I felt that they were disappointed when they met me since they drew the figure of an artist as a person whose image is very creative and different from ordinary people. I am an artist who is unsophisticated in daily life and I also place importance in being like that. Nonetheless, this disappointment did not last long and in short time, they understood my intention, knew me better as a person and so they immediately started to talk to me more comfortably.

This study has not only limitations, but also has some acquisitions. In the following section, I provide more detailed information on "Acquisitions".

2.7. Acquisitions

Working on this topic brought some risks but I tried to change these risks to advantages for me. I am working as an engineer in a private company. While I was working on my thesis, I was also exposed to discrimination as a heterosexual woman

in work life but I had just started to work there and didn't want to be an unenthusiastic person in my first days. So, I didn't show any reaction to these attitudes.

In my thesis, I gave a place to the interview which I held with my friend from work life, Ferhat. In those days, we held long conversations with Ferhat about the strategy that I should follow against these attitudes. Ferhat had lots of experiences while fighting patriarchy, masculinity and conservatism in the previous years and he shared his experiences with me. He advised me to "Act like nothing has happened as if they are at fault. If you do not, they will think that they are righteous and you may be crushed, they also might try to crush you more." Briefly, Ferhat explained that the reasons for behaving in such a manner towards oppressive people and I admired that he challenged such people in this manner although he was exposed to a lot of discriminatory treatment.

Consequently, I realized that my experiences in comparison with theirs are less difficult, and I felt as bad that I did nothing to challenge these experiences. As a result of this bad feeling, I asked a question myself "While I was weak against such overbearing people, how can I write a thesis as for gays and lesbians?" Despite my hard work and efforts of one year, I took the risk of not getting a promotion or benefit and I decided to fight back to save my reputation. I wrote down my experiences and shared them with my supervisor. Since there were not any changes or results, I shared these with higher directors in our company. Finally, the employees that had treated me with discrimination and had nonverbally harassed me were warned because of their attitudes. For this reason, writing this thesis has made me a more combative and resistant person at the work place.

My research about my thesis has also brought me some other features which I can use in my private life. While I was carrying out field research, my advisor recommended some strategies. For example, she wanted me to ask "How?" and "What?" questions to the participants to learn more details about their experiences. I

started to use these strategies in the conversations that I have in my private life and I realized that before using these methods, I had been asking too few questions for fear of seeming not to be knowledgeable. I recognized that these actions had been creating a disadvantage for me regarding learning from the conversation. Also, because of these actions, my conversations had not been continuing with an ambiance. In summary, I learned to have more effective conversations.

At the beginning of this research, I believed that I was almost fully free of homophobia. I had positive attitudes towards lesbians and gays. However, during the interviewing process, I asked about the homophobic attitudes which my respondents experienced, and through their answers, I understood that some over-emphasized so-called positive attitudes were actually homophobic. Lesbians and gays would like to be treated as ‘normal’; in other words, they do not want their sexual orientation to be especially emphasized.

In addition, when I started the project, I had adopted the mode of an ‘elder sister’; similar to how white western feminist academics approached third world women in their research. After the interviews, I understood lesbians and gays had a solidarity network and had developed lots of strategies to cope with prejudicial discrimination and harassment. I did not believe that they were passive when they came across these negative attitudes. Nonetheless, I found out that I am passive and not in any solidarity network as a heterosexual woman. There are many things that other women and I can learn from lesbian and gay individuals on how to struggle in work life and in daily life; they may even be an ‘elder sister’ for me.

In this chapter I have dealt with the research methodology that is used in this research. In the following section I deal with how white collar gays and lesbians experience discrimination in Turkey.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

3.1. Discrimination

Discrimination may be defined as different treatment of individuals or groups based on arbitrary ascriptive or acquired criteria such as sex, race, religion, age, marital or parental status, disability, sexual orientation, political opinions, socio-economic background, and trade union membership and activities (Süral, 2009; Çayır & Ceyhan, 2012).

Discrimination takes the form of refusing to interview or hire, terminating employment, paying an employee less compensation, giving poor performance reviews, denying or delaying promotions or raises, denying benefits, reassignments, layoffs or any other singling out of a person for reasons which affect that person's conditions of employment⁷.

In his review of the international treaties that outlaw discrimination, Wouter Vandenhoele finds that “[t]here is no universally accepted definition of discrimination” (2005: 33). In fact, the core human rights documents fail to define discrimination at all, simply providing non-exhaustive lists of the grounds on which discrimination is to be prohibited. Thus, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights declares that “the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (Article 26). The European Convention

⁷ Retrieved from http://www.dragndropbuilder.com/uploads/2/8/2/6/2826317/custom_themes/678717651148649011/files/Discrimination.pdf, in May, 2013.

for the Protection of Human Rights declares, “The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, color, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status” (Article 14). Left unaddressed is the question of what discrimination itself is.

Any viable account of what discrimination is will regard it as consisting of actions, practices, or policies that are—in some appropriate sense-- based on the (perceived) social group to which those discriminated against belong. Moreover, the relevant groups must be “socially salient,” as Kasper Lippert-Rasmussen puts it, i.e., they must be groups that are “important to the structure of social interactions across a wide range of social contexts” (2006: 169). Thus, groups based on race, religion and gender qualify as potential grounds of discrimination in any modern society, but groups based on the musical or culinary tastes of persons would typically not so qualify.

3.1.1. Workplace Discrimination

Workplace discrimination refers to when institutions and/or individuals within them enact unfair terms and conditions that systematically impair the ability of members of a group to work (K.M. Rospenda, J.A. Richman, & C.A. Shannon, 2009). Often times, it is motivated by beliefs of inferiority of a socially disadvantaged outgroup compared to a dominant group (Roberts, Swanson, & Murphy, 2004). Racism, or discrimination based on race, justifies the mistreatment and dominance of members of a particular racial group due to beliefs of their genetic and/or cultural inferiority; it also carries with it a history of societal power relationships between races (D. R. Williams, 1997).

As mentioned above, discrimination can also occur between disadvantaged groups themselves. For example, de Castro et al. (2006) noted how a sample of immigrant workers in Chicago observed that “Ecuadorians, Puerto Ricans, and Polish were

favored over Mexicans” and “Koreans were favored over Latinos and Latinos over Filipinos” (p. 255). These ranking systems were shown to be initiated and perpetuated by both coworkers and employers/supervisors alike (A. B. de Castro, K. Fujishiro, E. Sweitzer, & J. Oliva, 2006). Indigenous Latino farm workers in Oregon have reported experiencing ethnic discrimination from other Latino farm workers who had risen through the ranks to become foremen or supervisors (Farquhar et al., 2008). Also, African Americans from different workplaces reported experiences of intra-group discrimination from other African American co-workers (DinDzietham, Nembhard, Collins, & Davis, 2004).

Discrimination against workers with disabilities has also been shown to have both societal and historical influences and to persist despite being made illegal by the Americans with Disabilities Act (Moore, Konrad, Yang, Ng, & Doherty, 2011; Scheid, 2005; Snyder, Carmichael, Blackwell, Cleveland, & Thornton, 2010; Stuart, 2006).

Ageism, which is discrimination based on age, has been shown to have a life course trajectory whereby it disproportionately affects younger workers in their 20s and older workers above 50 (Gee, Long, & Pavalko, 2007).

According to The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) sex-based discrimination is defined as "treating someone (an applicant or employee) unfavorably because of that person's sex"⁸. Gender discrimination has been shown to result in pay and promotions based on gender rather than performance.

⁸ Retrieved from <http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/sex.cfm> in May, 2013.

3.1.2. Sexual Orientation Based Discrimination

Any form of discrimination can be considered to have an emotional impact on the person involved, but employees are still reluctant to report such behaviour directed at them. Despite the low levels of reporting of discrimination behaviour, it still occurs. Discrimination based on sexual orientation should be considered in a vacuum, but rather in relation to the broader work environment (Griffith & Hebl, 2002:1191; Ragins, Cornwell & Miller, 2003: 71)

When approaching a sensitive topic such as sexual orientation based discrimination, it is important to distinguish between sexual orientation, gender identity and sexual identity as different variables (Nangeroni, 2007). However, many employers are not aware of the differences between these variables, as it can be confusing.

Wintemute (1995:6) views sexual orientation as a complex phenomenon that has several senses. Wintemute argues that sexual orientation is indicative of a person's choice the engage in 'emotional-sexual' contact. It can take the form of either being sexually attracted to persons of the same sex (gay or lesbian), persons of the opposite sex (heterosexual) or persons of both sexes (bisexual). Breytenbach (2000: 25), on the other hand, gives a more elaborative definition by stating that "sexual orientation is a person's preference to gratify sexual and erotic feelings, thoughts, fantasies, and behavior, toward people of the same or other sex", whereas gender identity is more focused on how one perceive oneself: man, woman, or a combination of both. A person might have a penis but prefer to relate socially as a woman (Nangeroni, 2007). Sexual identity is more directed at how a person sees himself or herself physically: male, female, or in between. Someone might for example be born female but wishes to see her body as male in all aspects, meaning her sexual identity is male (Nangeroni, 2007).

Discrimination based on sexual orientation, however, can be defined as negative actions that are directed at LGBs because of their orientation. It (directly) involves organisational policies or decisions, as it includes interpersonal animosity from co-

workers or supervisors, offensive jokes and comments regarding gays, verbal and sexual harassment, and even physical violence (Deitch et al., 2004:200). Wintemute (1995: 10) gives a more simplified definition by stating that discrimination based on sexual orientation occurs when one person discriminates directly or indirectly against another person based on that person's sexual orientation. According to Wintemute (2003) direct discrimination occurs when formal legal equality is not provided based on sexual orientation. Wintemute (2003) also defines indirect discrimination as attitudes that “disproportionately affect LGB individuals”.

Deitch et al. (2004:199-201) describe formal sexual orientation discrimination as involving institutionalized procedures against LGBs. These procedures include restricting job duties, passing an employee over for promotions, or failing to equitably reward an employee due his/her sexual orientation. They also emphasize that discrimination based on one's sexual orientation is rather common.

Informal sexual orientation discrimination can be viewed as negative actions directed at LGBs based on their sexual orientation that does not directly involve organizational policies. This usually manifests itself in the form of interpersonal animosity from co-workers or supervisors and derogatory jokes and comments (Deitch et al., 2004:199-201). It is this fear of being discriminated against that causes LGB employees to conceal their orientation (Correia-Hirata & Kleiner, 2001:92-93; Day & Schoenrade, 2000:347-348; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001:1246). These authors also acknowledge the fact that the informal type of discrimination tends to be more common in the workplace.

Levine and Leonard's (1984) framework suggesting two forms of work discrimination, which are ‘formal’ (institutional policies and decisions such as hiring, firing, promotion, salary decisions, and job assignments)’ and ‘informal’ (interpersonal dynamics and work atmosphere, such as verbal and nonverbal harassment, lack of respect, hostility, and prejudice). Whereas *formal discrimination* affects achievement or status of an employee at the workplace, *informal*

discrimination undermines achievement indirectly by affecting psychology and job performance.

According to Levine and Leonard (1984) harassment is an ‘informal discrimination type and they conceptualize harassment as verbal and nonverbal.

Levine and Leonard (1984) argues that verbal harassment occurs in the form of gossip, taunts, ridicule while nonverbal harassment occurs in the form of hard stares, ostracism, damages to personal belongings. Tania Ferfolja (2010) describes the Overt & Covert Harassment as “Broadly, it could be divided into two types: overt and covert. The former, generally involved obvious and direct abuse of the teacher, whereas the latter was often more subtle and the meaning, target and/or perpetrator less clearly defined” (p.409)

Chojnacki and Gelberg (1994) identified four levels of work discrimination: (a) overt (presence of explicit formal and informal discriminations), (b) covert (presence of discrimination in the absence of a formal antidiscrimination policy), (c) tolerance (presence of formal antidiscrimination policy, but lacking informal support), and (d) affirmation (presence of both formal and informal support).

Chung (1998) suggested another dimension of discrimination: direct versus indirect. Direct discrimination refers to discriminatory practices against individuals who are known or presumed to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual. Indirect discrimination refers to a discriminatory or hostile work atmosphere experienced by lesbian, gay, and bisexual workers whose sexual identities are neither known nor presumed to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual. According to Chung (2001), discrimination occurs as ‘potential or encountered; the first refers to ‘possible discrimination as a result of disclosing one's sexual orientation’, and the second refers to ‘discriminatory practices encountered by the person’. This dimension is similar to Levine and Leonard's (1984) distinction between anticipated and actual discriminations. ‘Anticipated’ however, implies subjectivity and ‘actual’ implies objectivity. The proposed model uses more neutral

terms so that potential and encountered discriminations may be viewed from both subjective and objective perspectives.

As a minority group, LGB employees face challenges as well in the public workplace. However, institutions in the public area are increasingly acknowledging their commitment to create discrimination-free workplaces for LGB employees and some organisations also include sexual orientation as a protected clause in their anti-discriminatory policies as a mechanism to adhere to the legislative requirements (Day & Schoenrade, 1997:148; Ragins & Wiethoff, 2005:177; Riccucci & Gossett, 1996:175)

However, expressing commitment and anti-discriminatory policies are only part of diversity management. It is therefore important to understand the factors contributing to sexual orientation discrimination in order to coherently manage diversity.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) experience discrimination and prejudice in many workplaces. Irvin (2005) found that there was prejudiced behavior and treatment, such as not being promoted, denial of opportunities and sabotage of work. Whereas, at times the perpetrators were the peers of the victim, frequently they were her/his managers and supervisors with the authority to decide on benefits (such as overtime, additional training, or good shifts). Denial of benefits such as partner super annuation, partner travel, and family health benefits was also another form of discrimination.

Irvin (2003) also explains that homophobic discrimination is treating homosexual employees differently from heterosexual employees on the basis of their sexual orientation. An example would be that the relationships and work of these employees are more carefully monitored. According to Irvin (2002) "Homophobic behavior, harassment, and discrimination included homophobic jokes, verbal and physical harassment, destruction of property and threats which were directed at the

participants. The perpetrators of this type of behavior were generally work colleagues or clients".

3.1.3. Effects of Discrimination

It is important to understand the significance of sexual orientation discrimination, and that it should not be limited to the definitions listed above. Sexual orientation discrimination covers a wide range, from implicit events such as repeated comments and questions relating to marital status to explicit, malicious, anti-gay jokes (Dawson, 2005:46). Hill (2009) warns that “disclosure in unsafe workplaces can lead to discrimination, organizational exclusion, ridicule, verbal and physical threats, violence, marginalization, or hitting the lavender ceiling (a perceived tendency for organization to not promote or advance LGBTQ members in the system)” (p. 41). For example, Tejada (2006), in an analysis of 65 surveys from gay men working in organizations with gay-friendly organizational policies, found that those that disclosed their sexuality to their supervisor reported experiencing greater hostility in the workplace. This hostility creates a fear on LGBT individuals at work place. This fear of discriminatory behavior often leads to LGBs avoiding disclosure of their sexual orientation, which impact negatively on them. This impact can be of a psychological nature, which could result in decreased productivity or efficiency resulting from emotional trauma, non-cohesive work teams, poor communication or destructive conflict among workers (Day & Schoenrade, 1997:147)

Similarly, Smith and Ingram (2004) summarize results where “heterosexism and unsupportive social interactions were each related to negative psychological health outcomes” (p. 57). These findings illustrate that disclosure in unsafe work environments can not only negatively affect LGB workers physically, but psychologically as well. The latter can be explored through the concept of *minority stress*.

First coined by Brooks (1981), minority stress describes the strain minorities experience resulting from hegemonic oppression. It is defined as “a state between the sequential antecedent stressors of culturally sanctioned, categorically ascribed inferior status, resultant prejudice and discrimination” (p. 84). “Individuals experiencing minority stress often struggle with negative feelings and emotions that have potential consequences for identity development and adjustment. Factors contributing to minority stress are threaded throughout social institutions, including the workplace” (Buddel, 2011, p-6).

Drawing on the minority stress perspective, Meyer (1995) studied the experiences of 741 gay men and found that negative mental health outcomes were significantly associated with experiencing prejudicial events. Meyer (1995) has developed three prejudicial conceptualizations that affect the psychology of LGB workers: *internalized homophobia*, which is the negative homophobic schema internalized by the LGB individual; *perceived stigma*, which is belief of the LGB individual that she or he is going to be treated differently; and *prejudice events*, which are the discriminatory, violent, or biased acts encountered by the LGB individual.

Additional studies investigating the impact of stress resulting from homophobic behaviors and/or prejudicial events on LGB workers further illustrate negative consequences for these people. For example, in a study of 287 LGB employees, Waldo (1999) found that “LGB [Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual] people who had experienced heterosexism exhibited higher levels of psychological distress and health-related problems, as well as decreased satisfaction with several aspects of their jobs” (p. 229), resulting in disengagement from the workplace. In a more recent study of 97 workers, Smith and Ingram (2004) also found that depression and psychological distress were related to discrimination in the workplace. Smith and Ingram, through an investigation of support for victims of heterosexism, hypothesized that two types of coworker responses exacerbate feelings of distress for GLB workers; that is, *blaming responses*, where the person is blamed for the outcome of the situation, and *minimizing responses*, where the significance of the

event is downplayed. Smith and Ingram's findings seem to indicate that, while blaming LGB individuals for the negative outcomes is inhumane, minimizing responses are significantly associated with increasing psychological distress.

Evident from the discussion above is that heteronormativity creates a stressful environment that LGB workers must successfully navigate in order to survive in the workplace. Specifically, to successfully navigate the heteronormative workplace environment, energy must be expended on protective behaviors: Organizations leaving gays, lesbians, bisexuals and other sexual minorities out are denied the energy, resourcefulness and creativity of these individuals. Instead of using these qualities to improve workplace performance, sexual minorities are forced to use their energy to survive and to protect themselves, along with advancing and developing as far as possible in a homophobic environment (Powers, 1996, p. 82).

3.2. Coping Strategies

Chung (2001) argues that individuals react according to their perceptions, thus perceived discrimination is the main factor that influences the individuals' decisions regarding coping strategies. According to Chung, the difference in how individuals deal with potential and encountered discrimination provides for a structure to differentiate between main categories of coping strategies. Whereas a number of these strategies are used against potential discrimination, others are used to when discrimination is encountered (2001). Chung further argues that the dimensions of formal and informal discrimination may be used to differentiate between coping strategies; however these dimensions have not been studied in theory or in field research in terms of how these different strategies are used by LBG individuals to cope with formal and informal discrimination (2001). According to Chung, this dimension of potential (as opposed to encountered discrimination) may be useful to understand coping strategies regarding perceived discrimination (2001).

choose the strategy category “social support” and may choose “silence” or “quitting”. The other thing, is not mentioned in this model is, effect of backgrounds. If the LGB employee is brought up in a urban based area, and their family is upper – middle class and can talk comfortably at sexuality issues, the employee may choose confrontation, or if he/she is not completed the self-acceptance process may choose Quitting easily since his/her family is upper – middle class. Degree of the close relationship of employees with LGBT, feminist or any other movement, in the other words activism. Individuals are mostly aware of their rights and how to manage the processes of identity management and situations of discrimination or harassment. LGB employees who are active activism may choose confrontation as a strategy category. In the following part, several strategies considering a perspective based on identity management and strategies based on contextual and individual differences.

Chung's (2001) coping strategy framework includes three models. The first coping strategy model is the Vocational Choice model, which describes how LGB persons make career choices in response to potential discrimination. Three vocational choice strategies are identified in this model: *selfemployment* (being one's own boss to avoid discrimination), *job tracking* (examining whether an occupation or job position is welcoming to LGB workers and customers), and *risk taking* (selecting a vocational option knowing that there will be risk for discrimination). The second model is the Identity Management model, which refers to how a person manages disclosure of information about his or her LGB identity for the purpose of dealing with potential discrimination. Five strategies that have been derived from Griffin's (1992) in this model are *acting* (engaging in heterosexual relationships to appear to be heterosexual), *passing* (fabricating information to appear to be heterosexual), *covering* (censoring information disclosing LGB identity), *implicitly out* (behaving authentically but not explicitly identifying oneself as LGB), and *explicitly out* (explicitly identifying oneself as LGB).

The third model of Chung (2001) is the Discrimination Management model, which involves how a person responds to discrimination encountered. There are four

strategies in this model: *quitting* (to resign from employment), *silence* (to refrain from any action in the workplace), *social support* (to discuss the experience with others), and *confrontation* (to confront perpetrators or their supervisors). The author (2001) notes that Vocational Choice and Identity Management model strategies are for dealing with potential discrimination (both formal and informal), whereas Discrimination Management model strategies are for dealing with encountered discrimination (both formal and informal). Coping strategies in all three models are chosen by the individual on the basis of his or her perceived discrimination, which may or may not be real.

Although Chung's (2001) conceptual models seem helpful for career counseling with LGB persons and are based on some research (e.g., Anderson, Croteau, Chung, & DiStefano, 2001; Griffin, 1992; Levine & Leonard, 1984), more research is needed to validate these models because of a lack of empirical research regarding these model strategies, especially for the Vocational Choice and Discrimination Management models. Validation of these models may enhance future theoretical and empirical work, as well as career counseling with LGB persons.

3.2.1. Identity Management Strategies

Identity management is the key factor in all strategies (Chung, 2001). Because the basic issue causing homophobic discrimination and harassment for lesbian and gay individuals is sexual orientation. Being a homosexual means being stigmatized, censured, immoral, abnormal, sinner and any other thing which has a negative meaning. LGBT people can be killed just because of their sexual orientation in all over the world. For this reason lesbian and gay employees should consider consequences of the disclosing their sexual orientation, especially in the unsafe work environments (Griffin, 1992). Thus there is need for using identity management strategies. Lesbian and Gay people can create these strategies by themselves or can learn in activism, from close friends, by reading etc.

3.2.2. Disclosure in Safe and Unsafe Workplace

According to Griffin (1992), degree of ‘safeness’ is determinant for disclosure decisions of LGB individuals. In unsafe workplaces LGB individuals can come across discrimination. Hill (2009) indicates that revealing sexual orientation identity in unsafe workplaces can cause discrimination, exclusion, ridicule, verbal and physical threats, violence, marginalization, or experiencing the ‘lavender ceiling’ (not to promote or advance LGB employees) (p. 41). In safe work places which have supportive practices for LGB individuals, or have some regulations or protect LGB individuals, in which LGB individuals work in a job of which nature is not heterosexist and homophobic, LGB individuals may have more tendency to disclose.

Anderson, Croteau, Chung, and DiStefano (2001) found in their study which comprised 172 lesbian and gay student affairs professionals, that WSIMM (Workplace Sexual Identity Management Measure) is successful measure of identity management strategies. However since the environment of these professionals is more liberal, they also indicate that more research is necessary to develop the WSIMM tool.

As seen above, and summarized by Badgett (2001), “Disclosure in unsafe workplaces can lead to exclusion, threats, violence, and reduced opportunity. However, disclosure in safe environments has been associated with many positive outcomes.” Unfortunately, there are not millions of safe work places and jobs having a nature which is not heterosexist. So, for several reasons LGB individuals would chose to disclose at different levels by taking some risks of experiencing discrimination or harassment. Although all the risk of discriminatory treatment, some LGB individuals decide to come out and experience different consequences (Griffin, 1992). Ward and Winstanley (2005) refer explanation of Humphrey (1999) about why LGB individuals come out and point out that why people decide to come out depends on number

of reasons. Humphrey (1999) indicates the three main reasons for coming out at work place as being honesty and integrity at the personal level, the benefits of establishing open relationships at the professional level and the belief in importance of educating peers on sexual minorities (Cited in Ward and Winstanley, 2005).

3.2.3. Identity Management Strategy Models

Identity management strategy models developed by Griffin (1992) and Woods (1993) have some similarities. First, I would like take these models a place separately and then make a comparison between these models. Griffin (1992) had developed a model of identity management strategies consist of four categories as “passing”, “covering, “implicitly out” and “explicitly out”. Griffin (1992) also argues that these four categories are in persistence. Griffin describes ‘passing’ as being at the one end of the continuum and involving fabrication of information to appear to be a heterosexual (1992). Whereas fear of negative treatment based on sexual orientation motivates this strategy with the greatest level of sacrifice of self-integrity, it is also frequently perceived by LGB individuals as the safest in terms of protection from discrimination or violence. Griffin places ‘covering’ at the next point on the continuum; ‘covering’ is defined as censoring information so as not to be perceived as lesbian or gay (1992). According to Griffin, this strategy also is based on fear and protection from discrimination and hostility at the workplace. The sacrifice of self-integrity is less because this strategy involves omission rather than deception. Griffin’s third point on this ‘continuum’ is ‘Being Implicitly Out’, which is to be authentic in life while not identifying oneself as lesbian or gay (1992). In Griffin’s definition of ‘Being Implicitly Out’, because sexual orientation is not explicitly expressed, there is some amount of safety and the future possibility of adopting more protective strategies. As there is no deception or omission, self-integrity is also ensured. At the counterpoint of Griffin’s continuum is ‘Being Explicitly Out’, a point at which the individual is authentic regarding him/herself and identifies as

model 'as directly influencing disclosure decisions'; whereas contextual conditions are presented 'as moderating this relationship, and directly influencing the outcomes of disclosure' (Croteau et al., 2008: 539). Clair et al. (2005) examines individual differences in four category as 'self-monitoring', 'propensity for risk taking', 'identity development' and 'personal motives'. In the following of text I would like to mention these four categories of individual differences in detail. However I first deal with the conceptualizations of Clair et al. (2005) that makes relationships between the manners that influence the differences between individuals.

With respect to identity development, Clair and her colleagues (2005) note that according to earlier research and theories, LGB identity development is likely to influence decisions regarding disclosure, along with the nature of other social identities of the individual. Clair et al. (2005) stipulate that there is an even more complex relationship between 'identity development' and 'disclosure' than initially posited and suggest that individual whose invisible social identities are more developed may not always be disclosing regarding those identities. The authors especially underline the notion that individuals having more than one 'potentially stigmatizing identity' may be less likely to reveal an invisible identity. According to Clair et al. (2005), differences between individuals are related to their motives, which may include maintaining a 'coherent sense of self', establishing or maintaining relationships, getting relevant employment benefits or initiating social change. Clair et al. (2005) further stipulate that these motives may result in 'passing or revealing identity management choices', based on conditions specific to the individual. The authors provide examples of these kinds of choices, such as one individual choosing to pass so as to protect his or her partner who is not disclosed or another individual choosing to disclose so as to accompany his or her partner to a social event.

Now, I would like to provide the detailed explanation of four steps of conceptual framework developed by Clair et al. (2005) on 'individual differences'. According to Clair et al. (2005) 'self-monitoring' is the individual's observation, regulation and

control of the degree to which he or she meets expectations of society regarding his or her role in a particular situation (p. 87). This model stipulates that high self-monitors will conform to social expectations; whereas, low self-monitors will emphasize self-expression despite these expectations. Clair et al. (2005) further stipulates that high self-monitors choose from among a number of diverse identity management strategies so as to comply with a particular social situation, but low self-monitors may not be able to use passing strategies, even if they wish to, because they are not accustomed to complying with these expectations. Clair et al. (2005) also indicate that LGB workers who report that they frequently take risks in their lives will be more likely to disclose their identity, which risks negative treatment such as discrimination and isolation, at the workplace as opposed to those who do not take risks.

After giving a detailed explanation of the first main category of conceptualization of Clair et al. (2005), individual differences, now I would like approach the second category as 'contextual differences'. Clair et al. (2005) examine 'contextual differences' in terms of 'Organizational diversity', 'Industry and Professional norms and legal protections' and 'immediate interpersonal context' within the work places. Croteau et al. (2008) explain these three categories of Clair et al. (2005) well. According to Croteau et al. (2008), the organizational diversity climate includes 'organizational social norms, organizational policies, organizational practices, and the presence of other individuals who have revealed their stigmatized identities.' These authors argue that LGB employees will be more likely to disclose if there is support for diversity, which includes policies of nondiscrimination and favorable treatment of disclosed employees. They stipulate that dominant norms in the sector and profession, along with legal protection, also affect the amount of risk taken through the disclosure of a potentially stigmatizing identity. The authors note that the military is an example of a profession which requires passing as a heterosexual; on the other hand, human service professions are indicated as possible necessitating more personal disclosure. The authors argue that the 'immediate interpersonal context', the characteristics of the relationship with the other person or persons and

the ‘demographic characteristics’ of the other person are significant. In other words, individuals are more likely to disclose their identities in the context of close relationships and in particular to individuals who are favorable towards diversity. The authors describe such ‘contextual variables’ as signals that influence the decision of individual regarding disclosure by providing information on whether this disclosure will lead to supportive or unfavorable, stigmatizing treatment. (p. 540-541). Model of ‘contextual differences’ is emphasizing the contextual differences at the work places. However a context of lesbian or gay individual doesn’t constitutes only by workplace context, it also constitutes by elements of her/his life outside of the workplace, such as family, close friends, social clubs being membered.

After providing information on “Stigma-Based Interpersonal Diversity Disclosure Model” of Clair et al. (2005) broadly, I would like to mention another model named as “A stigma-Based Home-Work Disclosure Model” as dealt with in the study of Croteau et al. (2008) which is based on Ragins’s researches (2004, 2008). The first category of this model, ‘anticipated consequences’ explains that, the costs and benefits are the primary considerations for anticipated consequences; “Examples of specific positive consequences of disclosure include relief at not having to conceal, closer interpersonal relationships, increased self-esteem and affirmation, reduced role stress, and the opportunity to positively influence the workplace climate or create social change. Examples of specific negative consequences of disclosure include social isolation, verbal harassment, job discrimination or job loss, truncated career paths, and physical assault.” (Ragins, 2004, 2008). Second category ‘Socially Constructed Characteristics of LGB Stigma’ explains: Stigmas elicit different reactions based on how they vary in terms of four particular perceived characteristics (controllability, peril, disruptiveness, and course) (Ragins, 2004, 2008). Ragins (2004, 2008) describes the impact of each of these characteristics on disclosure. According to Ragins “LGB workers are less likely to disclose in work environments where they believe their coworkers see being LGB as a choice (the stigma is seen as “controllable”), feel threatened by LGB issues (the stigma is seen as posing a peril), or are likely to be uncomfortable or have other negative responses that might cause

difficulties in the workplace (the stigma is seen as disruptive)” (2004, 2008). These first three stigma characteristics are related to disclosure decisions because such characteristics determine the perceived degree of safety for LGB workers in a particular work setting and thus contribute to anticipation of negative versus positive consequences to disclosure. The fourth stigma characteristic, ‘course’, refers to the way in which the condition associated with stigma changes over time (Ragins, 2004, 2008). Most relevant to LGB identity management are possible changes or development in LGB workers’ degree of awareness and affirmation of their own LGB identities. For example, those workers first coming to terms with being LGB may be less likely to disclose than those workers already sure of their sexual identity.” (Ragins, 2004, 2008). The concept, ‘course’ is similar to Griffin’s ‘continium’ approach. The third category of Ragin’s model, “Internal Psychological Factors” pertains to psychological processes concerning self-identity and self-concept. Ragins discusses self-verification theory and posits that workers will seek interpersonal interactions that affirm their internal sense of self.”. This category of Ragins (2005) is similar to ‘identity development’ category explained in the disclosure model of Clair and her colleagues (2005). However Clair and her colleagues emphasizes the relation of sexual orientation based identity to the other stigmatized identities and don’t mention identity development in detail (2005). Ragins (2004, 2008) examines this factor in detail as dealing the identity development in two categories of self-identity and self-concept. Ragins discuss the last category of her model, “Environmental Factors” as the degree to which the work environment is supportive of or affirmative toward LGB workers. This category of Ragins is similar to “organizational diversity” category explained in the disclosure model of Clair and her colleagues (2005).

3.3. Sexual Orientation in Turkish Legal System

In the Republic of Turkey, the LGBT people do not enjoy legal protection from discrimination and abuse. Although the current Constitution of Turkey guarantees that all individuals are “equal without any discrimination before the law”, and “everyone possesses inherent fundamental rights and freedoms which are inviolable and inalienable.” There is no language in the Constitution, or other legislations, that specifically protects LGBT individuals from discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Albeit the grueling life conditions of LGBT persons, there is no explicit reference to sexual orientation in Turkish laws. According to the Article 10 of the Constitution titled as ‘Equality before the Law’.

Article 10 of the Constitution, the article on equality, does not include sexual orientation and gender identity. LGBT organizations in Turkey demand that the article on equality be amended to include gay, bisexual and transgender persons. The application of this law sometimes works against LGBT individuals since sexual orientation and gender identity are not clearly stated in the article on equality (Aydın, 2007).

Similarly, Article 3 of the Turkish Penal Code (TPC) secures equality before the laws and courts. Whilst Article 122 of the TPC bans discrimination, Article 216 of the Code in question provides for a general ban of openly “provoking people to be rancorous or hostile against another group”, and of “humiliating another person just because he belongs to different social class, religion, race, sect, or comes from another origin” (Tekin, 2012:6). According to a legal report on Turkey by Lawyer Yasemin Oz (2011), there has been a sample case in Bursa in which a criminal case was filed against hate speech towards LGBT persons relying on Article 216 of the

transition, this includes changing diplomas and certificates. There is also no equality body, ombudsman, etc. in Turkey dealing with discrimination on the ground of sexual orientation or gender identity. According to Article 125 of Civil Servants Code, civil servants whose behavior is against the dignity of their profession or whose behavior in the work place is immoral shall receive disciplinary punishment. Since LGBT persons' sexual orientation or gender identity are often accepted as "immoral or against dignity", there is the pressure of such disciplinary punishment on LGBT workers. Besides this, there are many other special laws regulating the rights and duties of specialised civil servants such as judges, prosecutors, army officers, police officers etc. According to all of these special laws, "immoral behaviors" are reasons to receive disciplinary punishment. Those articles are also threatening specialised LGBT civilservants. Also according to Article 17 of the appendix of Turkish Army Forces Health Capability Regulations Number 19291, dated 24 January 1986, gays are not allowed to enter the army. The Turkish military still uses DSM II (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) dating from 1968 whereas the medical community currently uses DSM IV-2000. According to DSM II homosexuality is a psychosexual disorder and those who have this "pathology" are considered "unfit to serve" in the Turkish Armed Forces. In Turkey, transgender persons especially are not employed because of the prejudice against them. Most of them are forced into the sex industry. And although gays and lesbians apply to LGBT NGOs for legal advice when losing their jobs because of their sexual orientation, because of the fear of coming out, it has been observed that many of these people do not apply to the courts. So collecting data on court cases is very hard.

There are two cases where officers were fired from their work because of their sexual orientation. The courts ruled on behalf of the plaintiffs but the plaintiffs wanted to keep the information confidential. In Turkey four LGBT NGOs give LGBT persons support by giving legal advice for their cases. But these NGOs do not have the possibility to engage on behalf or in support of the complainants. To avoid violation of the right to work of LGBT persons, amendment of Article 5 of the Labour Code in order to avoid discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is

According to the report of Kaos GL (2009) which has been prepared through one hundred surveys and in-depth interviews with lesbian, gay and bisexual employees, discriminatory experiences are encountered in terms of loneliness, being fired, not being hired, alienation, mobbing/harassment, humiliation and stigmatization (p. 5).

Gay and lesbian employees in Turkey are not very much aware of legal processes till they have a discriminatory treatment. Güney, who is the advocate of a LGBT NGO, reported: “They know the implementation since they are public servants, but they do not know how the legal process works till they are fired. This is also related to their status of being hidden.” Öz (2011) points out that homosexual people apply to LGBT NGOs also when they encounter discrimination at the work place.

Most of the respondents reported that they do have a detailed knowledge on how to claim their rights, but they are aware of the possibility of applying to the European Court of Human Rights. They commented that the first place that they will apply to in the case of discrimination at work is LGBT NGOs in Turkey and the existence of such NGOs makes them feel better.

In the following sections I address “Construction of ‘Femininity’ and ‘Masculinity’ in the Workplace as a Source of Discrimination”, “Informal and Formal Information” as a symbolic violence, “Formal Discrimination”, “Informal Discrimination” and “Psychological Effects of Discrimination”.

4.1. Construction of ‘Femininity’ and ‘Masculinity’ in the Workplace as a Source of Discrimination

Since the late twentieth century, discrimination issues related to sex and gender in the public places and labor market have been discussed.

According to Connell (1995), “Masculinity is not only what constitutes being a man (for example, strength, emotional control and an ability to control the immediate environment), but also everything that femininity is not” (cited in Boyle, 2001: 3).

Thus, most of the work spheres which are not seen as ‘feminine’ have a ‘masculine nature’ and are seen as being appropriate for heterosexual men who are in compliance with gender norms. Therefore, this calls for the destruction of all of the gender forms that are out of the appropriate heterosexual male gender norm in work places. As Boyle (2001) argues in general: “Masculinity is contingent upon the symbolic annihilation of femininity, homosexuality and disembodied forms of masculinity.” (p.3). For this reason, male domination does not want to allow ‘disembodied forms of masculinity’ in the occupational areas which have a masculine nature, such as law and engineering, and discriminates, excludes or harasses gays and lesbians.

In the context of the arguments put forward by Yaşın & Dökmen (2009 cited in Karataş & Çiftçi, 2010: 150), I discuss the construction of femininity and masculinity in the work place with the aim of analyzing gender-based discrimination. Norms of femininity and masculinity are influential in discriminatory practices in the workplace. In this society, whereas the norms of femininity refer not only to being good-looking, well-groomed, young and healthy, but also being weak and in need of protection, as well as being a good wife, self-sacrificing mother and a capable and diligent housewife, the norms of masculinity refer to physical, mental, sexual and economic strength and power, as well as success and status (Yaşın & Dökmen, 2009 cited in Karataş & Çiftçi, 2010: 150). I asked what ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ meant to the respondents. In Ferhat’s words:

Masculinity and femininity are learned. It is more masculine to be tall, muscular, bearded, and to wear a dark colored t-shirt. It is in the way an individual speaks and thinks. If you read Virginia Woolf, it is more feminine, if you read Bekir Coşkun, it is more masculine. I am sure that, abusing women during sex is considered more masculine by most of the men in Turkey. Also, in Turkey, when you behave like a ‘bear’, eat like a ‘bear’, to speak crudely, not use cologne, you became a ‘man’ from the perspective of society. When a heterosexual man wears an earring, there are comments such as “he is wearing an earring, just like a woman.

In addition, the concept of labor has been associated with the concept of gender in the society. This division of labor based on gender as a result of patriarchal and capitalist ideologies creates inequalities between men and women. State institutions reinforce and recreate this division of labor based on gender.

Women are associated with the natural or biological because of their reproduction capabilities while men are associated with the cultural. Also, “the biological difference between the sexes, i.e. between the male and female bodies, and in particular, the anatomical difference between the sex organs, can thus appear as the natural justification of the socially constructed difference between the genders and, and in particular of the social division of labor. (Bourdieu, 2001: 11)

According to Lister (2002) while women are associated with natural, sexual minorities are with ‘unnatural’ because of the gender normative perspective. According to Kaos GL (2009) gays and lesbians in the military can be fired on the basis of the expression of “unnatural relationship” referred to in the Military Penal Code No. 153” (2009: 136).

According to Lister (2002) the gendered dichotomy which creates a sexual division of labor is a heterosexual product relating all existences with the exception of heterosexual men, to being emotional, sexual and within the domain of the private sphere. Heterosexism is “an ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any non-heterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship or community” (Herek, 1992: 89). In this ideological system, the construction of femininity and masculinity plays a significant role. In Ferhat’s words:

There is an image of Fatih Ürek in society and you are discriminated against depending how much you are like Fatih Ürek. Femininity is a something related to patriarchy and heterosexism, in a manner in which femininity is associated with all that is negative. In order to weaken and devalue all

homosexuals, society automatically treats all gay men as if they are feminine and passive. They do not want women and homosexuals in the public sphere and in work life in order to maintain their power.

According to Doğan (2012), LGBT individuals are forced into constrained areas in work life just as they disclose their sexual orientation and gender identity; as a consequence, LGBT individuals either choose to hide their gender identity, or if they choose not to, risk being excluded from the labor market (p. 13).

Gay men who have certain features which are associated with women are discriminated against. In Bora's words:

Adopting the behavior which society ascribes to women, for instance, using the word 'Ay!' (An expression frequently used by women in Turkey to express sudden pain, surprise, fear or happiness), speaking in a high tone of voice, adopting a 'refined' manner of speaking, and performing a lot of facial mimics and bodily gestures, and swaying hips and arms when walking. For instance, I sway when I walk and adopt a refined manner when speaking. ... I experience discrimination in work life since I am seen as an effeminate gay.

Güney, an advocate, reported how teachers have to stay hidden and how they experience formal and informal discrimination in Turkey:

Nobody decipher herself/himself. Because, when they decipher their homosexual identity, for instances teachers know that they will get reaction by the other teachers, students and their parents. Oh everybody is good, marvelous! They do not allow their students in those schools, the homosexual individual is dismissed and she/he is made ruined. If they would not be fired; they could not continue their duties so much time at school since they cannot stand for these pressures.

Because of the dichotomous understanding of division of labor, men are associated with the public sphere and women with the private sphere. In addition, heterosexist ideology defines the occupation types that are appropriate for men and women, as well as sexual minorities. From this perspective, whereas men are viewed as being appropriate for professions in the public sphere, such medicine and law, the

appropriate professions for women are those in the private sphere, such as teaching and nursing. In this regard, gays can be associated with specific feminine jobs or to limited occupational areas, such as fashion design and the performing arts. These areas are accepted as ‘normal’ and appropriate for gays and lesbians. In Ferhat’s words:

The norms of femininity and masculinity are determined by heterosexual men. Heterosexual men define what should be the occupations appropriate for men, women and homosexuals. Homosexuals can be employed in all occupations. However, regardless of whether they are ‘effeminate’ or ‘masculine’, any doctor, engineer or prosecutor would experience problems if he says that he is homosexual since these professions are seen as being appropriate for heterosexual men. Heterosexual men say that women can be teachers, coiffeurs, work in the cosmetic sector or can stay at home. Since what heterosexual men understand from homosexuality is being ‘effeminate’, they say that gay men can at least be in the fashion industry, which is not sought after much, or can be singers; there are a few homosexuals among us, they can be artists like Murathan Mungan and Küçük İskender; these areas are allowed. While heterosexual men do not want homosexual men among them, they have ‘normalized’ them in areas like the fashion industry.

Cenk also reported that the occupations mostly in which gays are restricted to are: “Working in a store, the cosmetics industry or the entertainment industry, or being a coiffure or a fashion designer.”

Like all other minorities who are inferior to dominant groups, LGBT people experience discrimination because of being ‘other’ in this way.

Being different from the gender norms is one of the key determinants that causes discriminatory treatment for gay and lesbian employees. Thus, I have explained how these norms relate with discrimination. In the following section I discuss formal and informal discrimination mainly based on the arguments of Bourdieu (2001) and Hill (2009).

4.2. Formal and Informal Discrimination

Male domination is a “masculine order in the form of unconscious schemes of perception and appreciation” (Bourdieu, 2001: 5). Thus, Bourdieu (2001) points out that this masculine domination based on an “androcentric principle” continues its existence in a mystical and “symbolic” way which is accepted unconsciously and there is a “symbolic violence, a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims, exerted for the most part through the purely symbolic channels of communication and cognition...” (Bourdieu, 2001:1-2)

Symbolic violence is “invisible and unrecognized coercive social and cultural domination by a group that marginalizes and harms individuals in another, without physical force. It occurs in the everyday, uninterrogated habits of the dominating group” (Hill, 2009: 39) Male domination implementing a symbolic, homophobic violence against LGBT people has been penetrated to all spheres of life, it is “legitimated through various biological and social scientific systems of thought or the restraining and chastising hand of the government” (Öztürk, 2011: 1103). “Homophobic discrimination” which is defined by Irwin (2002) as differential treatments against homosexual people compared to heterosexual people at work places occurs as a reflection of the symbolic violence of masculine domination.

Homophobic discrimination occurs as formal and informal discrimination (Levine and Leonard's, 1984). As Chung (2001) points out, formal and informal discrimination also can be categorized as “potential” or “encountered”, as indicated by Levine and Leonard's (1984) conceptualization of “anticipated” and “actual” discrimination. All these concepts point out that discrimination can be realized or there might be a risk of realization. Since most of the respondents are hidden at different degrees, they mostly commented on the pressure of potential discrimination and they commented on how they use identity management strategies in order to protect themselves from encountering actual discriminatory treatment.

Gays and lesbians experience forms of formal and informal discrimination by the people at work places in Turkey (Doğan, 2012, Kaos GL, 2009, Öztürk, 2011). This demonstrates how masculine norms dominate and its symbolic violence in the form of homophobia processed by the people at work places and against lesbian and gay employees in Turkey in a covert way; how laws, regulations and their implementation are not adequate to protect lesbian and gay employees from this violent treatment; and furthermore, how employers can freely discriminate against their employees without the pressure of legal sanctions.

In the following sections I discuss “Formal Discrimination”, “Informal Discrimination” and after these, I talk over “Psychological Effects of Discrimination” with their forms in subsections.

4.2.1. Formal Discrimination

According to Levine and Leonard's (1984) arguments, there is formal discrimination in “institutional policies and decisions such as hiring, firing, promotion, salary decisions, and job assignments” Deitch, Butch & Brief (2004:199-201) similarly discusses these types of discrimination with consideration to whether there is discrimination based on corporate policies, procedures and implementations or not. Chung (2001) points out that formal discrimination directly influences the vocational achievement or position of the individual at work. I use all of these concepts in order to discuss the situation in Turkey through the reports of my respondents.

According to Güney, all laws are determined based on the Constitution of Republic of Turkey and all regulations of work places are determined based on the laws. So, laws are determinant on the discriminatory ground against lesbians and gays in Turkey. The Constitution of Republic of Turkey, the Turkish Penal Code, and the Labor Act forbids discrimination based on language, race, sex, political thought, philosophical belief, religion and sect and on other similar grounds.

Güney has pointed out that in the context of human rights and fundamental freedoms, there are rulings of the European Court of Human Rights against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, and in Turkey, which has ratified the European Convention on Human Rights, international agreements supersede national legislation according to the Constitution. Furthermore, unlike other European countries, there has never been any significant legal provision prohibiting homosexuality in Turkey (Irlenkäufer, 2012, Öztürk, 2011, Kaos GL, 2009). Also, as Öz (2011) argues, legislation creating direct discrimination against LGBT individuals is almost completely restricted to military service. These legislations of military can cause incidents of termination of employment of LGBT people and since the citizenship of sexual minorities is accepted as 'sexualized' (Lister, 2002), legislation is also restricting the reaching of the citizenship right of carrying out the military service.

However, there is discriminatory treatment against lesbians and gays in a widespread manner in Turkey. This is the result of the 'legal gap' based on the statement and understanding of 'public morality' in Turkey (Öz, 2011: 8). In general, the provisions on "public morality", laid out in most regulations, are interpreted to discriminate against LGBT individuals; in the absence of such a provision, the expression "regulations concludes with other enforcements" is used. In most of the regulations, there are provisions related to 'morality' and this is open to an interpretation that is not favorable to LGBT people (Öz, 2011).

According to Aydın (2009), a lawyer, the provision in this Law regarding public servants' actions, which can be qualified as immoral, and thereby, are not in compliance with the requirements to be met for being a public servant and can be grounds for dismissal, is used in practice to discriminate against these public servants (p. 134).

As Öz (2011) & Aydın (2009) argue, the provision regarding 'public morality' are the most frequently used to terminate employment or impose disciplinary action on

an employee, especially in the public sector (Kaos GL, 2009). According to statement of Ali Erol in the report of Kaos GL, homosexual teachers can be discriminated against in the form of being dismissed. Güney reported:

One of my clients, who had worked in public sphere, was working as a teacher in a school affiliated with the Ministry of National Education; the other was a police officer. Both of them were working in public institutions. The homosexual identities of both were detected by inspectors. Both were dismissed on the grounds of Article 125 of Law No. 657 on Public Servants.

Regardless of how these provisions are associated with ‘morality’, the main reason underlying these formal discriminatory implementations is the understanding of ‘morality’ adopted by conservative thinking in Turkish society. Turkish society has conservative and religious values and has been governed by conservative parties for years (Kalaycıoğlu, 2007). Besides, ‘Public morality’, as an understanding that is embedded in the culture in Turkey as well as it is embedded to the laws and regulations ignores and excludes ‘homosexuality’. It is mainly justified by religion because Turkey is a country in which most of the population Muslims, Islamic culture is widespread and homosexuality is considered to be a sin in Islam. Erdal reported: “In fact, I have a problem with morality in general. Religion is one of the elements grounding morality. I have a problem with ‘general morality’ since it fully ostracizes me, and as such, I would prefer to be ‘generally immoral’.”

In 2012 in Alanya, a gay choreographer was fired because of his sexual orientation¹⁰. The following statement by the manager illustrates well the understanding of ‘public morality’ in Turkey:

We would like to give all our friends a chance. However, the owners of our firm are devout people. When I saw his style of dress, I knew that they would not want him. In additional, if you wear a short that looks like a tanga, nobody will want to work with you.

¹⁰ Retrieved in June 2013 from Kaos GL, <http://www.kaosgl.com/sayfa.php?id=11192>

‘Public morality’ which excludes homosexuality and legitimates heterosexism and homophobia remains as a highly ‘abstract’ concept as long as elements that are directly in contradiction to this understanding are not clearly stipulated in these regulations. As Öz (2011) argues, when gays and lesbians claim their rights through legal remedies after experiencing discriminatory treatment, the courts frequently interpret the regulations to rule against homosexual people, as due to the legal gap in the Turkish legislation regarding sexual orientation and identity, this is matter left to the judicial discretion of courts.

Homophobic understanding of ‘general morality’ is embedded in the justice system and judges also demonstrate homophobia in their treatment of LGBT individuals during the lawsuits and in their rulings:

There was a judge with a thin mustache in the case for the closing of our NGO. When we came to the hearing, he behaved as if we were there to murder him. He was throwing the files around, and was quite angry. A judge usually places the file next to the other when he is done with it. This was his reaction... The defendants were there, the NGOs were in the courtroom... He said to them “What are you doing here? Get out! Get out!”. I was leaving to submit a petition, he asked me “Why are you submitting a petition, what are you going to do?”

Judges not only make discriminatory rulings, but they may also implement non-verbal harassment towards homosexual people. Güney reported that this is the case for labor courts. Whereas the courts should rule on the lawsuits on the basis of the relevant articles of the international agreements ratified by Turkey, they generally do not take these into consideration. Some LGBT individuals have to apply to international courts on the grounds of these agreements and LGBT NGOs are informed on how to claim rights, provide advice and help LGBT people prior to and during the suit as one of my gay respondent Çetin did. He claims his rights with the

aid of the advocate of a LGBT NGO, Güney and the court shows an ignoring treatment as Güney reported:

The manner of the judge was bad. His firing is because of his sexual orientation, not for any other reason... If this experience would be between a woman and a man this issue would be mentioned. Nevertheless it was on the contrary... Any word has mentioned about his homosexuality and discrimination on the first decision of the court and after the cancelation of this decision by the Supreme Court.

This shows how homosexuality is ignored in the legal processes as it is in the laws and the regulations and how homophobia pursues its existence even in the courts where all Turkey citizens should be treated as 'equal' as it is determined in The Constitution of Turkey Republic.

After dealing with the 'general morality' understanding that is embedded in society and laws in Turkey, in the following sections I deal with how and what types of 'formal discrimination' that white collar lesbians and gays experience in Turkey.

4.2.1.1. Recruitment Processes

As the most common among all types of discrimination, homosexuals and bisexuals who could not indicate that they were leading a heterosexual life or profile themselves as such with respect to their visibility during the job applications or when they are going through the recruitment processes are not hired because of prejudices. (Kaos GL, 2009: 7).

After lesbians and gays apply to jobs, they are invited to interviews. However, prior to job interviews, an internet(i.e. Google)search can be carried out on them by the management or human resource teams of a work place. Derya, an advocate of a company and the advocate of a LGBT NGO and has written books and articles about

LGBT issues, in particular on discrimination against LGBT people and gives statements to TVs, radios and printed and digital media, had a discriminatory experience during a job interview:

I had a job interview experience, which seemed like they had searched me on Google and then invited me. They seemed as if they invited me because they were curious about me rather than being interested in holding a job interview with me. It was a career firm. I expected more questions to be asked in job interviews, but they did not ask many questions. I asked more questions than they did.

While heterosexual people are asked lots of question in a serious interview format and have a chance for being evaluated for job opportunities, she had experience behavior stemming from homophobic curiosity and from the beginning, she had not been given a chance to find a job. She had experienced a formal discrimination from the responsible people.

Esra, who is a LGBT activist and works as a team manager of a software team in a university on which she reported that it has a provision forbidding sexual orientation based discrimination in its regulations, reported discriminatory treatment during the job interview was held before being hired for this position:

They had already carried out a Google search on me prior to my interview for my new job. The issue was put forward. They asked me how I viewed them. I said that their internet page was very good and said that it seemed like their target was the Koç, Bilkent, Sabancı group of universities. They asked me how I knew. I said that I had always been in contact with universities. They asked how. I said that I worked at NGOs and that we always held events at universities, organize conferences with academicians. I said that I was always in contact with them. They asked me which NGO. I replied Lambda (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual) and also Amargi. They asked me if I were a member or if I was there to give support. I went home and thought about it. Then I realized that they had asked me if I were a lesbian or not. They hired me as a manager. They had called my former manager and had him/her and she/he called me. I asked if there was anything unfavorable. Apparently, they were concerned about my being single. They asked if I would be able to communicate with other people on the team who were married with children. The manager had said that I could communicate with all kinds of people. When

I started to work, this question seemed really absurd. At work, there were all sorts of people, married, single, homosexual. I do not know why he/she was so concerned as to ask such a question even though this individual was a feminist. She/he valued me, wanted me to find a good job, wanted me to support them. In the past, I had been able to solve problems that no one else had been able to.

Derya and Esra reported that it is easy to find something that creates suspicions about their identity from Google. When homosexual people become visible, it mostly results in discrimination (Kaos GL, 2009, Doğan, 2012). Derya felt that they had behaved to her as if they were ‘curios’ about her. In terms of the definition of Levine and Leonard (1984), this is a ‘nonverbal harassment’ against her. At the beginning of my research, I had assumed that lesbians do not experience discrimination since they are invisible. However, I have found that they can become ‘visible’ and that an internet search is one of those ways. With their disclosure or if there is suspicion about their sexual orientation, they experience discrimination.

In contrast to the argument of Doğan (2012), based on the research on Kaos GL’s report (2009), degree of conservatism at the work place is not always the reason for discrimination, and in parallel to Doğan (2012)’s argument, the point of view of employers and colleagues is also influential on discrimination against homosexual people. We also see that how ‘aversive heterosexism’ (Ragins et al, 2003) can exist even in the safe work places which are egalitarian and have provisions on discrimination based on sexual orientation in its regulations.

Halil İbrahim Dinçdağ, a football referee in the Turkey Football Federation and a radio and TV producer and speaker for many years, was fired from all his jobs because of his homosexuality. He had difficulty finding work not only in professional areas, but also in blue collar jobs since many interviews had been held with him on TV and in the printed media and everybody knew him. He reported how he experienced discrimination before and after recruitment processes:

I applied for jobs in the areas ranging from sales consulting to working in café, i.e. dishwashing; I applied for jobs in all areas that you can conceive of. We

were searching for a job with a friend who also was unemployed at that time together. They were calling him the day after but not me. You give your CV; they take it and looking at it, thinking “Who is that?” When they searched on the internet, they say “OK”. I called a place; a large café there is even a billiard hall where football matches are watched. I had applied for the position of service man, its salary was good and there was social insurance. The manager liked me and my way of speaking. The day after, I went back and the same manager said “There isn’t any problem for me, but the high level managers said that there could be a problem since football matches are watched here and the customers may recognize you and there can be a problem.” The other place that I applied for the position of dishwashing was a night club. My friend was working as a cook there and he had said that he needed a person to work with him and he recommended me. However, during the recruitment process they recognized me and said “How can it be possible, brother? How could a person who had this kind of a career in the past work in such a place?” and they did not hire me; in other words, they got out of it. Then I gave my CV to a store and they called me the day after. The conversation was nice, then I was interviewed by the manager, he recognized me and he did not accept me with an excuse like, “*Hocam*(this word is used in man-to-man talks in order to express a familiarity, the direct translation of it is “My teacher”) excuse me, but there could be reactions from the customers.”

Tania Ferfolja (2010) two types of harassment: ‘overt’ and ‘covert’. The overt form is generally in the form of apparent and direct abuse of the employee; in contrast, the covert form is not only less apparent, but intent of the action, as well as the target and perpetrator of this action are not as clear. (p.409)

Based on this definition, Halil İbrahim has experienced ‘overt’ harassment since all employers treated him as a person who is offensive to everyone and excluded him from work life, while Esra and Derya experienced it in a ‘covert’ way.

Derya, an advocate at a LGBT NGO, reported that LGBT NGOs have channels for LGBT people to receive consultation and the most frequently asked question by gay men is on the “ineligibility report” in relation to recruitment processes:

They ask whether they will experience problems in work life because they have received an ‘ineligibility report’ from the military. There have not been any call backs when they actually do encounter a problem. They usually ask us what they should do. We usually advise them that the workplace cannot see this

management team by cutting his hair and taking off his earrings. As Kandiyoti (1988) argues in her article on women's experiences, Cenk bargains with a patriarchy by showing himself as accepting the rules of the patriarchy which has strict heterosexist gender norms and changes his appearance; however, he does not agree to resign and he challenges the system by bargaining with it.

Women strategize within a set of concrete constraints, which I identify as patriarchal bargains. Different forms of patriarchy present women with distinct "rules of the game" and call for different strategies to maximize security and optimize life options with varying potential for active or passive resistance in the face of oppression. (Kandiyoti, 1988: 274)

As Lister (2002) argues, women and homosexuals are sexual minorities subordinated by the same masculine system which is governed by heterosexual men since they are associated with the body. Thus, such parallels in women's and lesbians and gays' experiences are inevitable.

The former management of the university demonstrates a kind of 'tolerance' when he changes his appearance in compliance with heterosexual gender norms and decreases the level of discrimination to some degree, such as communicating with him. He reported that before he started to come out and changed his appearance and used make-up, he had long hair and wore earrings. Cenk also defined the former administration as comparatively democratic since the president of the university was democratic. However, this could not change the conservative environment of the school. This demonstrates that that the democratic and tolerant administration feared the reactions in a university which was predominantly conservative.

The 'tolerance' of the former administration is another problematic issue; in reality, this is a reflection of 'aversive heterosexism' as Ragins, Cornwell, & Miller (2003) argues:

At the heart of aversive racism is the individual's ambivalence over egalitarian beliefs regarding socially acceptable behavior, on one hand, and their negative feelings toward minority groups, on the other hand. These feelings are usually unconscious and involve discomfort, disgust, or even fear of the minority group. Aversive racism may have a direct counterpart in aversive heterosexism (Winegarden, 1994). In essence, aversive heterosexism holds that unconscious homophobia leads individuals to behave in heterosexist ways, even though they profess and believe that they are not heterosexuals.

Through the Çetin's and Cenk's experiences I argue that, regardless of whether the point of view of work organizations and the people in the work environment is 'egalitarian' or 'conservative', lesbians and gays have a risk of losing their jobs after their disclosure on other legal grounds because of the internalized homophobia..

Informal discrimination against lesbian and gay employees is widespread as well as formal discrimination is. In the following sections I discuss the "Informal Discrimination" with their forms in subsections.

4.2.2. Informal Discrimination

Another aspect of the symbolic violence of heteronormative culture is 'informal discrimination'. Levine and Leonard (1984) and Deitch et al. (2004:199-201) discuss this type of discrimination as discriminatory treatment, which is not based on corporate policies and practices. The concept of 'informal discrimination' of Levine and Leonard (1984) refers to "interpersonal dynamics and work atmosphere, such as verbal and nonverbal harassment, lack of respect, hostility, and prejudice". Levine and Leonard (1984) refer to 'lack of respect' issue as different from Deitch et al (2004). Dawson (2005) refers to types of discrimination which are different from the forms that are referred to by Deitch et al. (2004) and Levine and Leonard (1984) as "repeated comments and questions relating to marital status." (p. 46).

These 'psychological effects' of informal discrimination can further manifest in the form of stress and anxiety and may result in dissatisfaction and feeling

misunderstood, pressured and detached (Dawson, 2005:46; Day & Schoenrade, 2000:348; Deitch et al., 2002:15) or more serious results. In Rıdvan's words: "Transsexuals are murdered and nobody feels sorry for them. Some are more sincere; they take a knife in hand and kill them; others do this with their eyes. Both are the same". "Hard stares" are a nonverbal harassment type, and therefore a form of informal discrimination. Rıdvan means that the psychological effects of informal discrimination may be as serious as physical violence, even murder.

After dealing with the general theorisation of 'Informal Discrimination', in the following sections I deal with "Verbal Harassment" and "Nonverbal Harassment" as forms of "Informal Discrimination".

4.2.2.1. Verbal Harassment

When homosexual people are disclosed or recognized in the work places, they experience verbal harassment, such as humiliation, ridicule and hate discourses (Doğan, 2012: 14). Levine and Leonard (1984) define 'verbal harassment' as 'gossip', 'taunting', 'ridicule' and the similar Levine and Leonard (1984) points out that taunts and ridicule are the most frequently encountered 'verbal harassment' types in the work, place as most of the respondents reported.

The most frequently encountered form of 'ridicule' and 'taunt' is saying *top* (A pejorative expression used to refer to homosexual men, which in everyday language means 'ball'), *ibne* (A pejorative expression used to refer to homosexual men, for which there is no direct translation into English) or *yumuşak* (A pejorative expression used to refer to homosexual men, which in everyday language means 'soft') behind a gay's back in Turkey, as Bora, who is an academician, reported: " "Are you a *top*?" Here is the classical question." Some of the respondents reported that heterosexual men mostly use these words when they want to insult another man or homosexuals as referring to a role that is passive during sex. Asiye, a translator, reports that not only blue collar men, but also white collar men often use these comments. She is weary of

this, so she leaves when these types of conversations are held. This example also demonstrates how verbal harassment may cause isolation of homosexuals from work environments. Ferhat reported an experience of ridicule: "I recognized that one of my colleagues spoke femininely especially when next to me." Reacting when a gay demonstrates an aspect associated with the heterosexual male culture can be another form of 'verbal harassment'. This is a form of 'taunting'. In Ferhat's words:

Once, a person from the work place said he found my interest in football strange because the image in their heads is always: "Homosexuals are always feminine, homosexuals always are passive". We had played football together with another male colleague and he was surprised because I played football. Since football is a heterosexist game, it is surprising for him that a man who is outside of the heterosexual male image plays football.

Interpersonal animosity from colleagues and managers may be present in the form of verbal sexual harassment as (Deitch et al., 2004:200). Lesbians are harassed 'verbally' because of their femininity and when their homosexuality is found out, the harassment increases. In Selin's words:

In the gallery where I work at now, a painter was approaching me so often that I said I have a girlfriend. At this time, he said "How interesting! I have never had a lesbian friend, I will come to your LGBT NGO" and then he started to call me. I was annoyed and I decided not to talk to these kinds of silly men.

Selin also reported that her male manager verbally harasses her often, saying that lesbianism is corrected when a lesbian gets married. Elçin also reported that she was verbally harassed by her manager when she was working in a café. He harassed her by referring to remedying her lesbianism. Gontek (2007) defines 'corrective rape' as "rape as an instrument to 'correct' them for their supposed opposition to the heteropatriarchal" (p. 3).

Although there is not sufficient research as to whether this exists in Turkey in practice, this fact that exist in the other countries such as South Africa reflects to the culture as a discourse carried out by heterosexual men in Turkey. Halil reported that

the owner of a radio station, to whom Halil had referred a friend of his said that he would give hire her if she agreed to have a sexual relationship with him.

According to Dawson (2005), another form of ‘verbal harassment’ at work place is ‘repeated questions’, especially on marriage. Most of my gay and lesbian respondents reported that they are weary of answering this kind of questions. Some of the gay respondents reported that, even when there are other single men who are older than them, they are asked about their marriage plans more often than these men.

The discourses, ‘I accept homosexuals’ and ‘You are different from the other homosexuals’ are forms of verbal harassment towards homosexuals that are widespread in Turkey. I argue that this is a type of ‘verbal harassment’. As I have discussed in the former sections, aversive heterosexism (Ragins et al., 2003) is present at work places, even in the safe ones which define themselves as egalitarian. People in the work environments, who are sensitive regarding homophobia as well as the other types of discrimination against other minorities, may not be fully free of homophobia. This may require a long time and being closer to LGBT individuals so as to become more familiar with their lifestyles. Nonetheless, it seems to require a high level of consciousness since it is difficult for even the LGBT people to be completely free of homophobia.

The statement “I accept homosexual people” makes gay and lesbian respondents feel abnormal and subordinate. This is a heteronormative comment since heterosexual people take this statement at its face value. As Ferhat, who is an engineer in a conservative firm in the telecommunication industry, reports: “In reality, it is the thought “I endure” that lies behind the statement “I accept” What does “I accept” mean?! I think this discourse is selfish and related with the fact that they see themselves as dominant”. Cenk adopts a different approach on the ‘acceptance’ discourse: “Homophobia or sexism has not yet been fully analyzed. Enduring or keeping quiet is a different thing from acceptance.”

‘Hard stares’ are another form of nonverbal harassment, as discussed by Levine and Leonard (1984). In Asiye’s words:

One of my colleagues glances at me in a certain manner. I am talking about the one that is Aevi Kurdish. Certainly, we cannot say this for all Alevi Kurdish people. It is like that... It’s as if she is perpetually examining me. I just feel this. It irritates me. I cannot be comfortable near her.

A homosexual friend who has aspects different from the heterosexual gender norms and has connotations to homosexuality can be a ‘sexual orientation indicator’ for another lesbian or gay person who does not have obvious features regarding her/his sexual orientation. A friend of İrfan, now working a research assistant in an engineering department in a non-conservative university, visited him at his university when he a research assistant in the Social Sciences in another university which he defines as not being homophobic. After the friend left his office, the some of his colleagues and personnel had looked at him with ridiculing glances.

Ferhat also reports that an Alevi Zaza female colleague, who defined herself as not being homophobic and who had a political standpoint due to her ethnic minority and gender identities and to whom he had disclosed, harassed him by insistently asking if homosexuality is a matter of choice or orientation. He reports that she believes that it is a choice. Ferhat reports that he was angry at her because she would not listen and learn as she has strong prejudices against homosexuality. As Levine & Leonard (1984) also argue, Ferhat has experienced nonverbal harassment in the form of ‘damaging of personal belongings’ As demonstrated by the experiences of Ferhat and Asiye, most of the respondents report that possessing a political standpoint based on other identities, such as being Kurdish, a leftist or a feminist, is not by itself sufficient to increase the understanding of an individual and fully eradicate homophobia.

İsmail, a research assistant in the Social Sciences in a university, reports that during a school event, his professors assumed that he was a heterosexual man, which made İsmail feel humiliated. As Kaos GL (2009) argues, ‘humiliation’ is the most

‘prejudice events’, refers to the discussion of Brooks’ definition of “minority stress”. Only the concept of ‘internalized homophobia’ can be accepted as a new contribution of Meyer on the ‘minority stress’ subject. I dealt with the experiences of my respondents in terms of psychological effects of discrimination based on Meyer’s conceptualisation. The respondents experience the psychological effects of the negative treatment in terms of being stressed about the risk of stigmatisation, stress of being found in media or internet if they are activists or known person, stress of maintaining the lies, being treated as if different, stress of enhancing of violence against lesbians and gays and visibility in Turkey, stress of being blamed, stress of getting minimizing responses, being tired of having to struggle and consuming energy.

Falling outside the norms of femininity and masculinity which exist and are imposed by society, homosexuals and bisexuals who do not comply with these are usually ‘defeated’ by mainstream gender norms. All problems that homosexuals and bisexuals face, extending from unimaginable humiliation to harassment to the termination of employment are psychologically devastating, to the point of depression and psychological crisis. (Kaos GL, 2009: 7). In Turkey, the reasons which create this kind of stress are fear of termination of employment, not being promoted, loss of their current position, being forced to resign or not be able to find employment, and lack of knowledge on how to claim their rights and the legal process, being forbidden to work as a homosexual as defined by legislation, as well as harassment, stigmatization and humiliation (Kaos GL, 2009: 11).

Prejudice, stigmatization, discrimination, harassment and all other homophobic attitudes against lesbian and gay individuals exist in different spheres of society and the potential of experiencing these have psychological and physical effects on these individuals. Whereas some try to live as heterosexuals in order to protect themselves from these homophobic attitudes, others live as homosexuals in their private lives and are disclosed in other spheres, such as work or family environment in varying degrees.

Each of these has different negative effects on lesbians and gays; as Ayşegül points out “People get married in order not to upset their families and to be accepted, and most probably, they become depressed. At worst, they even commit suicide.”As Ayşegül comments, lesbian and gay professionals experience these psychological effects at work as well as in other spheres. They also exert a lot of energy in order to survive at the workplace or not experience a decline in job satisfaction and success.

As Tejeda (2006) has found, even in safe, ‘gay-friendly’ work places, the people at the workplace can react negatively to gays and lesbians. This shows how widespread homophobia is and how far embedded it is even in the minds of people who seem to be democratic; thus, indicating the underlying aversion that is below the surface of the superficial ‘friendliness’ of these ‘democratic’ people. This unreliable environment causes stress on lesbian and gay employees regarding the disclosure of their identity. In order to avoid encountering unfavorable and hostile reactions in such work environments, they try to hide themselves. I found that lesbians and gays in Turkey experience this stress at different degrees even in the ‘safe’ work places.

All respondents have experienced at least one of these three types of stress in different contexts at work. The experiences of Asiye, a translator and Bora, an academician, are examples of the stress originating from perceived stigma.

Bora is always stressed about being stigmatized as a pedophile and pervert by the people at the university. Bora reports: “I am the one who has to prove that I am not a pedophile or a pervert, not them. If there is any accusation, they would just slander me right from the start saying that Bora already used feminine gestures, he already was a pedophile.” He is always careful to keep the door of his office open, to behave compassionately towards students and to avoid inviting them to his house. Bora works in the public sector and in a conservative work environment; he can be fired because of homophobia, and as such, his level of stress is very high.

Asiye, who is working in a professional association, is a leftist and a feminist activist. The conservative situation in Turkey, with the rise of Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi , AKP (Justice and Development Party, JDP) government and the pressure on women and LGBT individuals and all opponent groups makes her feel more stressful. According to Asiye, the senior management team is conservative although her Department, which carries out researches, is not as sexist and her female manager does not make any homophobic comments when there is a discussion on LGBTs individuals. She does not fear being fired as much as Bora since her environment is relatively safe, but she reported that fears being treated as if she is different: “Attitudes of people towards you can change. They might start to behave towards you in a strange way.” (Asiye). She also reported especially considering that gays and lesbians are often stigmatized as being perverts, and sex addicts. Therefore, she is anxious about being found out by her female manager. She thinks that if she were a gay man, it would not be a problem for her manager.

We see news on the termination of the employment of lesbian and gay professionals working in various areas and institutions, such as education, the police force, the military, banking and tourism more frequently in the media in the recent years. As a result of efforts of LGBT activists and NGOs, LGBT’s have become more visible. However, this visibility does not prevent hate crimes and other homophobic attitudes. As Bora argues, it may make the lives of lesbians and gays more difficult. He points out that the LGBT movement locates homosexual identity at its center and creates prejudice for LGBT individuals. He comments that “I am angry at people who claim that I have built my entire life and political life in particular around saying “We are gays. My gay identity is at the center of my whole identity”. Which heterosexual would build her/ his identity totally on a heterosexual identity?”

If there are homophobic attitudes, these should be challenged and LGBT NGOs have already been trying to do this. Furthermore, these NGOs have helped LGBT individuals to gain a peace of mind regarding their sexual orientation, increased their knowledge on how to claim their rights, and constituted a culture of solidarity

between lesbians and gays. However, they have also further enforced the invisibility of lesbians and gays. In addition, homophobia is enforced by the government, media, family, religion and the institutions and they increase the visibility of the LGBT people. In Asiye's words:

They are trying to add a new provision which states that "Homosexual marriage is prohibited". As if there is actually exists and they prohibit it. They will make homosexuals into targets by making visible something which does not exist. In the same way that the implementation on abortion is a sign of conservatism, I expect that they will soon argue that homosexuality should be prohibited in public sphere.

To the extent that visibility has increased, particularly where there is an image of homosexuality based on stigmas, and LGBT people have been made into targets by the government, incidents of prejudice have increased in Turkey as a result. These kinds of implementations cause a stress on lesbian and gay professionals as well as cause on women. Bora argues "I feel a pressure in the same way that a woman who experiences discrimination also feels it in this country" Lesbian and gay respondents are mainly fear the termination of their employment. This is a valid reason for stress since all professionals need to earn a living.

Smith and Ingram (2004), through an investigation of support for victims of heterosexism, hypothesized that two types of coworker responses exacerbate feelings of distress for GLB workers; these are, 'blaming responses', where the person is blamed for the outcome of the situation, and 'minimizing responses', where the significance of the incident is downplayed. Levine and Leonard (1984) discuss these responses as 'verbal harassment'.

Lesbians and gays feel like they are perceived as potential criminals. This is because of the stigmas arising from the homophobic culture. In Bora's words:

First of all, you try to prove that you are not bad. Others are not obliged to prove their innocence when they are accused; if you accuse someone, the burden of proof lies with you. You have to collect evidence to prove that he is guilty. However, I feel just the opposite: I feel that it is not the person who has accused me that has to prove my guilt but that I have to prove my innocence.

Ayşegül is a manager in an Education Consultancy agency which belongs to her male cousin. He offers this job to her and she goes to Istanbul to the central office of the franchise for an internship where she stays at her home of her cousin and his wife. The cousin asks why she often goes out at night and she replies that she goes to parties held by a LGBT NGO and is revealed during the conversation. When she asks if this is a problem, her cousin replies he does not mind as it is her life, and adds that since she already is an aggressive person, she should take care not to be aggressive should anyone make homophobic comments.

Ayşegül's situation demonstrates the potential of being blamed as a result of the internalization of stigmas against lesbians and gays. Her cousin offers a job despite her aggressive character and does not take any notice of her aggression until she discloses her identity. This attitude is due to the stigmatization of the LGBT people as potential criminals and this is a 'blaming response'.

When Ayşegül was working as a cost controller in a restaurant (she had disclosed to the female manager since she had worked as a dishwasher in a former café belonging to the same woman), she had reacted the male waiters' conversations in which the word *ibne* (A pejorative expression used to refer to homosexual men, for which there is no direct translation into English) had been used for humiliating another heterosexual man. She had been trying to explain that the real meaning of the word is 'passive gay', and they were using it incorrectly.

The people replied: "Does it cause you any harm? Why are you reacting so much?" These are comments which blame Ayşegül. She is not afraid of challenges, and is a LGBT activist; thus, it is important for her to challenge these questions with others to

force a homophobic person to think over homophobia. However, as these challenges consume her energy, she reported that she no longer enters into these kinds of conversations with people with whom she is not intimate.

When Zeynep, a research assistant in the Social Sciences in a university, talks about her problems with her girlfriend, her female colleagues are not concerned, but are interested and make recommendations when other female colleagues have problems with their boyfriends.

The problems with boyfriends are defined as being more important. When I tell them about my problems, they behave as if the relationship will end. The relationship with a boyfriend is a relationship which should continue. They do not make any suggestions like “Do this or do that”. Normally, they make a lot of suggestions, such as “Look my girl, you should do this or that”. They believe that I will be with a boy sooner or later.

Zeynep feels bad because of this issue, but she does not share her expectation and negative effects of this issue since she thinks that significance of the incident will be downplayed by her female colleagues. She reported she had given up on sharing these problems since she thinks they won't understand her. As a result, not being able to share problems and other issues related with her relationship makes her feel excluded.

Ferhat had worked hard for a long time to be a manager. In the end, he had gotten tired of having to struggle to achieve this target. He made plans to have study abroad. He plans to spend his savings for this target, but in another firm. He lost all his hope for promotion at the company since this work place is masculine, conservative; most people support the Justice and Development Party (JDP) and there is an Islamic culture (like sending email for the Islamic Holy Nights). According to Ferhat, exerting more effort is not enough to be promoted at work in such a conservative environment which discriminates against female and employees who are suspected of being homosexual.

Some of the lesbian and gay respondents are LGBT activist. They are at the risk of being visible and found out. They may be taped by a TV channel's camera or their photos can be taken by a newspaper. Some others are writing articles on LGBT issues for printed or digital media, such as magazines and internet sites, in particular for LGBT NGO's internet magazines or the reports of NGOs. Some of them are further ahead in LGBT activism and are invited to TV and radio programs in order to talk about LGBT issues or newspapers hold interviews with them. Those activities for some of those people are very important in terms of their standpoints in life. However, all of them are under the stress in different degrees of being found out through visual, printed or digital media. This worries them because of 'internalized homophobia' (Meyer, 1995).

Derya and Esra reported that they are worried about internet searches when they apply for a new job before and during the job interviews. Ayşegül, the manager of an education consultancy firm reported that she worries about being found out through internet:

When you search for my name on Google, you are faced with the name of the LGBT NGO. If I were, I would search too. If they do it, they find it directly. Parents and even students can do it. I have some articles which I had written about my own experience of homosexuality.

This effect is also highly restrictive and not motivating for the careers of lesbians and gays, as it has been in the Ayşegül's experience.

Because of the stress originating from internalized homophobia (Meyer, 1995), some lesbian and gay respondents lie in order to hide their sexual orientation identity. Bora, who is an academician in the Social Sciences in a university, located in a conservative city, reports that he believes that he is an 'effeminate' gay and his

voice, which is high and refined is an indicator of his sexual orientation and he gives fake reasons for the features of his voice:

I always hide behind the fact that I am an only child. I say that I was raised in a refined and elegant manner because I was the only child of an educated family. I reply that I am from İzmir to those who ask. When they ask me why I speak Turkish in such a refined and elegant manner as the way I talk reveals me. However, I am not from İzmir, but I say that I am from İzmir. I always say that I talk this way because I am from a rich and successful family from İzmir. Actually, I am from Bolu.

He reported that maintaining these lies is getting more difficult for him and sometimes he cannot answer new questions which are related to his lies:

I do sometimes go to İzmir in the summer. Once I got a real headache. I was asked which high school I had graduated from. I said that I was a graduate of Atatürk High School. There really is such a high school but I don't know its teachers. Then this person started to ask me if I knew this teacher, if I knew that teacher, and I was really surprised. I didn't know what to say. It happened to me once. Then I asked a few friends from İzmir. I learned which teacher taught math, which teacher taught this subject and so on. But I never encountered anything similar again. Well, I am learning. Which high school is the toughest, where graduates of the İzmir Atatürk High School go most frequently for pizza. There is the Fil Pizza, Sevinç Pastry Shop. I learned all these.

It is very tiring to construct new lies and maintain these without making mistakes. This creates a lot of stress for gays and lesbians and requires exceptional effort. Furthermore, as Powers points out (1996), because they make huge efforts to maintain these lies, lesbians and gays cannot use their energy for work performance at their jobs (p. 82). Bora reports that maintaining lies causes a decrease in his job performance and his morale.

In this chapter I have dealt with how white collar lesbians and gays experience discriminatory treatment in Turkey. In the following chapter I will discuss the coping strategies that are used by them.

CHAPTER 5

COPING STRATEGIES AT WORK PLACE

Minority groups and socially disadvantaged groups use various coping strategies to struggle against discrimination in their work lives in Turkey. As Lordođlu & Aslan (2012), Göker et al. (2005) argue, in order to cope with the discriminatory practices, Kurdish and Alevi people may choose to be silent to hide their ethnic or religious identities or they may prefer to apply for jobs where Alevi or Kurdish people are already employed.

Beşpınar conceptualizes women's work-related strategies, including the experiences of women who are employed and not employed. According to her, these are "(1) acceptance of (or preference for) traditional gender roles in the availability of resources from family, (2) clandestine acts used to gain maneuverability, (3) negotiations based on concessions, and finally (4) compensating for structural limitations" (2010, 523). Women also work harder so as to prove themselves at the work place in order to demonstrate that other aspects of their lives related with their gender role is not a handicap to carrying out the responsibilities of their jobs (Beşpınar, 2010, Ecevit, Gündüz-Hosgör & Tokluoglu, 2003). According to Ecevit et al., (2003) women in computer programming occupations use the strategy of delaying marriage or being never married.

Just as the forms of discrimination against LGBT people, such as exclusion, humiliation and insult are similar to forms of discrimination against other minorities, their coping strategies are also similar (i.e. all minority groups use the strategy of hiding). Asiye, who is a lesbian working as a translator in a professional association, reported about her close colleagues at work:

One of them is gay, another one is a feminist woman and the others are women; one of them has a political standpoint due to being Kurdish, but is not judgmental. The other is Alewi Kurdish. She is in an oppressed situation due to this identity. They cannot openly express their identities as well. We were in the same situation of hiding.

Moreover if a person has more than one minority identity, the degree of discrimination increases (Brock, 2006). Most of the respondents claim that they suffer different types of discriminatory practices because of their multiple minority identities, such as being a lesbian and a woman, an Armenian and gay or a leftist and gay.

The most comprehensive conceptualization that covers all strategies that lesbians, gays and bisexuals use is made by Chung (2001). Chung (2001) makes a categorization in three models for the strategies that lesbian, gay and bisexual people use in work life. Chung (2001) argues that when discrimination is perceived, the strategies that LGB employees use can be categorized in “Vocational Based Model” and “Identity Management Model”. Chung (2001) also argues that when discrimination is encountered, LGB employees use the strategies that LGB employees use can be categorized in “Discrimination Management Model”. I found that lesbians and gays in Turkey use coping strategies when they are searching for a job and in the work place after being hired and most of these strategies are referred to in the theory of Chung (2001). However, I found that all of the strategies that gay and lesbian employees could use in work life can also be used together by these individuals. I also found that the perception of discrimination and actual occurrence of discrimination can also be concurrent. In addition, I found that a strategy can lead to the use of another strategy that can be categorized into any of these three categories. Thus, I argue that there is *‘fluidity between coping strategies’*. For this reason, I do not address the coping strategies in a general manner similar to the categorization of Chung (2001); in fact, I discuss these strategies in the sections in a consecutive form as strategies that are subsequent to each other and/or that parallel each other, since these strategies are “waiting” as subsequent/parallel strategies for a convenient moment in which they will *“fluidity into each other”*.

In the following sections I deal with the copings strategy forms that white collar lesbians and gays use in their work lifes in Turkey.

5.1. Hiding Sexuality

Lesbians and gays are at the risk of discriminatory homophobic attitudes almost in all work environments, so they have to make decisions on to what degree they should hide or disclose their identities (Lidderdale, Croteau, Anderson, Tovar-Murray, & Davis, 2007). The factors which are influential on identity management decisions of lesbians and gays other than degree of risk of negative treatment are self-integration and some beneficial expectations in workplace (Croteau, Anderson & VanderWal, 2008). White collar lesbian and gay respondents use the strategy of hiding their sexual orientation at different degrees and in different ways.

According to Doğan (2012) hiding sexual orientation is a necessity rather than a preference in the labor market in Turkey (p. 13). As Erol argued in the Kaos GL's report referred to above, "Homosexual individual is obliged to make her/his life based on heterosexual life which is the norm, and thereby live her/his homosexual relationships secretly without revealing these. As long as she/he does not publicly confirm that she/he is a homosexual and fulfills the expectations based on the category of masculinity or femininity, she/he can find a place under the roof of social, moral, religious, political institutions." (2009).

Güney, who is a lawyer, indicates that gay and lesbian lawyers hide their sexual orientation identities in Turkey. In his words: "None of the lawyers are disclosed, all are in the closet and I feel that most of them do not take the cases of LGBT people so as not to disclose their identities." Derya, who is a lawyer, reported that she feels the risk of violation, being ridiculed and denigration after her disclosure. In Derya's words:

No, I am not disclosed in the work place in any way. All in all, I think I will experience violent treatment even if it is psychological. Why should I let them ridicule me behind my back? Why should I let them say “Oh, she is sleeping with women” behind my back? Why should I be a joke to them? I do not do it because of lots of reasons.

In most of the occupations, discrimination occurs. Erdal, who has a Bachelor’s Degree in Law and has worked in several white collar and blue collar jobs reported: “All work environments are heterosexist. There is no difference between being a lawyer, a public servant or working at a bookstore for me.”

In the occupation of teaching, there is also a heterosexist environment which forces lesbians and gays to be ‘in the closet’, as we see from the comments of İsmail, who is a research assistant in the Social Sciences in a public university:

It was a very extraordinary thing for my mother when I told her that the person who was in my life those days was a teacher in a school affiliated with the Ministry of National Education; because a gay man can only be a prostitute, etc. It was the first time she understood that male homosexuality is different from the image she saw on TV. She asked again whether he was in National Education. She wanted like to hear whether he was in a private school. I said “Yes.” She said “Even in a public school?” I think my mom went back to her teaching period and considered whether her colleagues could have been gay and lesbian. From one point of view, she was astonished, and from the other, she was upset and she cried.

According to Hopkins (2009), a person who is outside of gender norms is seen as having committed ‘gender treachery’ and experience negative treatment. This normative understanding arises from unconscious perceptions (Bourdieu, 2001). In Ferhat’s words:

I claim that if I work at such a heterosexist environment in where only heterosexual men are dominant, once I disclose my identity I do not think that I will be harbored. A man would not be harbored in a work place just because of

being opposed to marriage. Because you are fundamentally disrupting what people have developed and memorized since they were born, you are a threat.

Lesbians and gays disclose their sexual orientation to some trusted people at work due to different concerns, such as being authentic. However, most of the respondents reported that disclosures to selected people at work do not change their general hidden state. In Ferhat's words:

In fact, the existence of a few people around us who knows us does not change much. This is because the dominant culture does not really change much. Because the dominant culture is a hundred percent heterosexist. In such large companies, it is impossible to disclose to numerous people. You can be disclosed to just few people whom you trust.

Along with modernism's dichotomous approach, which takes its heritage from the Cartesian thought, all existences 'other' than heterosexual men, women and homosexual people are associated with private sphere, body and sexualized (Lister, 2002). In order to bargain with this heterosexual male domination which humiliates, discriminates, excludes and harasses through the objectified meanings of women and the other sexual minorities, they use the strategy of 'desexualisation'. In work life, women are perceived with their feminine sides as "sex objects, but as nurturant objects, romantic objects, 'mother-of-my-children' objects, support objects (as exemplified in 'women's work'), and representatives of 'good womanhood' " (Carol & Pollard, 1993: 47). This sexualized and objectified position of women is used by men to compete with women (Singh, Vinnicombe & James, 2006: 78). Women use the strategy of desexualisation in the form of not showing their feminine aspects, which are associated with being 'not professional' or 'appealing' in work life (Singh et al., 2006: 78). Genres of managerial professions are associated with masculinity and so women may choose to be masculine to be successful in high positions (Schein and Mueller, 1992). While desexualisation brings success, it also brings social isolation and loss of the romantic relationship chances of women at work (Weitz, 2001).

Homosexual employees use the coping strategy of ‘appearing asexual’ in situations which can reveal their ‘sexual orientation identity’. Griffin (1992), Woods (1993) and Clair, Beatty & MacLean (2005) have concepts explaining this strategy. In the conceptualization by Griffin, ‘covering’ involves “censoring information in order to avoid being seen as lesbian or gay” (Anderson, Croteau, Chung & DiStefano, 2001). According to the conceptualization by Clair et. al. (2005), ‘concealment’ involves “actively preventing others from learning personal information that has the potential to reveal a stigmatized identity” (Chrobot-Mason, Button & DiClementi, 2002). Woods’ (1993) concept of ‘avoidance’ brings a more comprehensive explanation. According to Button (2004), “Woods (1993) suggested that an avoidance strategy requires continuous self-editing and half-truths.” This strategy is used if a gay or lesbian person has anxiety regarding negative treatment at the workplace (Griffin, 1992 & Chrobot-Mason, 2002) and gays or lesbians sacrifice self-integrity as referred to in the ‘passing’ strategy (Griffin, 1992). Unlike Griffin, Woods does not mention the reason for using the strategy but she makes a contribution to the literature by listing the ways of implementation of this strategy in work place. According to Woods (1993), gays and lesbians evade personal queries, speak about general issues, or change the subject of the conversation in order to avoid suspicions in terms of hiding their sexuality and their use of this strategy causes a perception of asexuality. I found that the informants are ‘closing the conversation’, ‘transforming the conversation’, ‘keeping in silence, and ‘quitting the place’ as a strategy of hiding. However, I found that whereas these strategies used during daily conversations often give lesbian and gays an ‘asexual’ status, mostly what occurred was that they were given a ‘question’ status in terms of sexuality. In Bora’s words:

The conversations of heterosexual men which are on girls and football matches are heterosexist conversations. If you cannot chime to these conversations you come to light, cause suspicion. I change the topic with the reason of this kind of fear.

Although there may be gays interested in football (Erol, 2010) most of the gay respondents reported that gays in Turkey are not interested in football, even are

disgusted by it since it is a masculine and homophobic culture and so they do not like to join in the conversations about it. There is an expectation regarding how a man talks or behaves and those who behave differently from is seen as a ‘deviant’ (Hopkins, 2009). For this reason, not joining in these masculine conversations may be an indicator of non-compliance with accepted heterosexual gender norms. For this reason, Bora avoids revealing his non-compliance by changing the subjects of the conversation. Bora also reported that when a dialog starts on football, he sometimes ends the conversation or leaves the place: “I leave that environment or I say I am not interested in football. If we are tired of acting, we don’t stay in such kind of places, only if we have to, generally not.”. Griffin (1992) argues lesbians and gays choose to avoid if they do not want to imitate heterosexuality. Bora’s comment confirms this statement.

Ayşegül, who worked as a research assistant and trainer in a social project of a university reported that during the breaks in the training, the nurses and midwives who were her students asked whether she had a ‘boyfriend’ or not and she answered using the word ‘lover’ instead of ‘boyfriend’. She also reported that she did not want to disclose because of the risk of stigmatization.

İsmail, who is a research assistant, reported that the professors assume that he is a heterosexual. One professor showed him photos she had taken during vacation of girls and the other spoke to him as if he were involved with the woman who had come to a university party with him. He reported that he keeps silent in such conversations to hide his identity. In İsmail’s words: “If they assume that I am a heterosexual, they can. Because suspicions about me worries me.”

In the following sections, I discuss strategy of “Construction a Fake Heterosexual Identity” as a form of the strategy of “Hiding Sexuality”.

5.1.1. Construction a Fake Heterosexual Identity

The concepts explaining this strategy are the ‘fabrication’ concept of Clair et al. (2005), ‘passing’ concept of Griffin (1992) and ‘counterfeiting’ concept of Woods (1993). As Croteau et al., (2008) argues, these authors discuss the strategy with very similar definitions. Lesbians and gays act in order to present themselves as ‘heterosexual’ while using this strategy. While Griffin (1992) and Clair at al. (2005) provide for a general definition of acting of heterosexuality, Woods (1993) refers to the ways that gay and lesbian employees use this strategy in the workplace, such as changing the features of a same-sex romantic relation into heterosexual one, giving some hints about a meeting, creating a story about a heterosexual involvement excellent in every aspect, attending events of heterosexuals and refraining from showing the features of their characteristics or likings which are correlated with their own gender identity.

Behaving as a heterosexual is the strategy which most of the white collar professional respondents use in work life. By behaving as heterosexual, most of the respondents believe the possibility of negative treatment decreases, since being an open lesbian or gay at the work place means taking the risk of hostility, stigmatization, harassment and discrimination. In Selin’s words:

I approach disclosure with worry. What will they say? Will I experience difficulty? And similar things... Everybody knows you as heterosexual and then they will say “Oh, Selin has become like that too!” You would like to be known as heterosexual in order not to experience these and similar situations and to keep people away from your private sphere.”

According to Cenk, who is working in a professional association: “It is wrong to categorize all homosexuals in the society.” Therefore, whereas some gays and lesbians have aspects which have connotations with their sexual orientation, others do not. Most of the respondents reported that if lesbians and gays have those aspects, the need of imitation is greater and if they do not, this kind of acting is not necessary. Halil İbrahim Dinçdağ, who is a football referee, radio and TV producer and speaker,

reported that before his identity had become disclosed when his story of being fired became known to the press and he had been invited to TV programs, he had not tried to imitate heterosexuality:

I did not use any strategy in order to be hidden until I became disclosed after I was on television. I behaved as naturally as now. Most of my friends, from my work environment, private life, and the people who watched me on television said “We did not think that he was a homosexual”. The perception of homosexuality put into words is: a person who exhibits effeminate behavior and has a different style of dressing.

This strategy also has another aspect: sacrifice of the integrity of personality. Griffin (1992) points out that acting as a heterosexual protects lesbians and gays from the negative results, but at the same time, they lose their self-integrity. Most of the respondents reported that their possibility to protect themselves from the homophobic struggle is greater when they are in the closet at the work place, but they also are faced with the problems of the necessity to pursue their lies, feeling inauthentic, and the fear of being disclosed, etc. Devrim, who worked in an international NGO and who is now unemployed, defined it as a ‘double life’ and Sevgi defined it as a ‘schizophrenic life’. In Sevgi’s words:

We were at home with my friend to whom I disclosed after 6 years. Just two months ago she disclosed me so badly, I really had a difficult time pulling it together. Once she invited everybody from work place. She made a comment and I just automatically managed to pull it together somehow; I had become a professional liar. The comment was related with the divorce. She ruined everything while she is trying to help me. One of them asked whether I have a woman friend or not. I said “You don’t say!” and managed the situation. But there still is a question mark in their minds.

In the following sections, I discuss “Behaving as if Interested in the Opposite Sex”, “Fabricating a Lover” and “Imitating Heterosexuality in Nonverbal and Verbal Features” as forms of the coping strategy of “Construction a Fake Heterosexual Identity”.

5.1.1.1. Behaving as if Interested in the Opposite Sex

Talking about people of the opposite sex, such as an attractive person, is always a way of socialization in the work environment. In such situations, lesbians and gays may use the strategy of “behaving as if interested in the opposite sex” (Woods, 1993) in order to construct a fake heterosexual identity.

According to Chrobot-Mason (2002), constructing a fake heterosexual identity is “associated negatively with perceived climate” Some of my respondents reported that they use this strategy for hiding in the work places which they perceive as unsafe. In Bora’s words: “There are gay men who join in conversations about girls in order to hide their identities.”. He also reported that it is a form of compulsory socialization. My respondent Selin, is a journalist mentioned that lesbians portray themselves as if they are interested in the opposite sex during ‘private girl talks’ at the work place and she reported that: “To say “Oh, yes, he is very handsome!” is one of the most commonly used statement.

Ferhat is a friend of mine from work life and with whom we meet in break times for lunch or drink something is working in a conservative firm in the telecommunication industry. One day, I witnessed his reaction to some masculine conversations on women. Ferhat was going to go to abroad to study the English language. Our male colleagues joked with him about finding a girlfriend in abroad. One of the men said “Ferhat, you won’t forget your friends in Turkey and find nice women from that country for us too, won’t you?” and the other said, “Who knows? You may come back with a girl with earrings, shiny blue tights, and a punk haircut and say that you will marry with her! ” Ferhat answered these questions saying “Why not?” and laughing cheerfully.

According to İlkkaracan (2012), the conservatism of Justice and Development Party (JDP) preserves the gender inequality and excludes all LGBT groups on the basis of

of values and customs. Ferhat reported that he has hidden his identity since the JDP is dominant in his company, which is conservative, sexist and homophobic:

Here you are accepted if you support the JDP, go to Friday prayers, look down on women, make crude jokes, and send emails to everybody for Miraj, if you are uninformed. I do not want to share my opinions or private life with such kind of uninformed people and so I do not even want to talk with them, forget about my sexual orientation!

Chrobot-Mason (2002) argues that acting as a heterosexual causes isolation for lesbians and gays in unsafe work places and Ferhat experiences similar isolation.

Lesbian and gay informants do not only use the strategy of behaving as if interested in the opposite sex. They also fabricate lovers in order to construct a fake heterosexual identity. In the following sections, I discuss this strategy.

5.1.1.2. Fabricating a Lover

Gays and lesbians are asked about their girlfriends, boyfriends, fiancés, etc. like heterosexuals in different spheres of social life, particularly in the work sphere. Most of my respondents reported lesbians and gays are asked about these issues as queries on their sexual orientation and fabrication of a heterosexual relationship is resorted to if there seems to be great amount of suspicion regarding sexual orientation or these questions are asked in unsafe work places. According to Woods (1993), lesbians and gays may behave as if they are interested in opposite sex, mention fictitious meetings or a lover, change the features related to gender while describing a same-sex lover, or fabricate a relationship with a person in the opposite sex perfect in every way. I found the first and last two of those forms in the field and I also found the last one is used when fear of discrimination is the greatest. Sevgi, who is a teacher in a public school, believing that she was stigmatized as lesbian by her colleagues, applied the strategy of fabricating a heterosexual relationship that was perfect in every way:

My colleagues with whom I had worked with for 6 years came to my home. They looked at the pictures on the wall (which are imitations of some artistic nude paintings of women) and said “Oh are you lesbian?” with disgust. They look at me and see that she does not have a lover, although she is old enough. I also do not have any bodily defects. You are open to everything; it is obvious that you are not living a Mother Theresa life and people are not fools. I had bought a new house and they came under the pretext of seeing my new home. After this experience, I said to myself “I need a boyfriend!” By the way, I created a story about a marriage and divorce. I was obliged to demonstrate that this marriage as a real marriage. Especially two of my colleagues were curiously asking about my photos in wedding dress. I said “I will show them to you.” I had designed them in Photoshop. Then I asked one of my male friends to be my ‘lover’. One night, we went out with my colleagues. I said “My lover will be here” and they were so surprised. This boyfriend came, hugged me and whispered something to my ear. Everybody believed that he was my lover. We then put our photos on Facebook. I had gotten married for an re-appointment (from East of Turkey to the West) before and so I thought that this could be a strategy. I started to write some half-fiction stories about my marriage and divorce. I said that my lover had wanted to go to the U.S., but I did not want to and stayed in Turkey” This is a schizophrenic life. Showing a boyfriend is also a strategy.

Some of the gay respondents who are not explicitly stigmatized like Sevgi reported they use the strategy of changing the features related to gender while describing a same-sex lover in order to fabricate a fake heterosexual identity. In Çetin’s words:

It is difficult to be gay: in any case, people expect a relationship and you tell people about your male lover, Emre as Emel (a female name in Turkey). So, I was talking about my lover as Emel because they expect a relationship, they expect something, they are continuously asking whether I have a girl friend or not. I was describing it as a relationship with Emel.

Bora mentions the ways of how he uses the strategy in his daily life and work life:

We save the names of our lovers with a girl name. If somebody takes our mobiles and sees a message like “My love, my honey, how are you?” from a male sender you will be found out immediately. We use a girl’s name as a nickname. While a heterosexual relationship can be expressed open, we have to keep our relationships a secret. One of the strategies I use is this: When anybody asks whether I am involved with anyone and why I didn’t marry, I answer “Yes, I have a lover” and I fabricate the name of girl which is similar to the name of my own male lover, for instance if his name is Özgür, I say Öznur. If I have to introduce my female lover, I introduce one of my friends. This is one of our greatest strategies.

“Lying to coworkers” (Chrobot-Mason, 2002) for fabrication takes energy (McNaught, 1993; cited in Chrobot-Mason, 2002: 325). Therefore, it may be a practical method for gays using the names that close he names of their same-sex lovers. I also found that in Bora’s experience, gay men can use the strategy of introducing their friends and he also reported all gay men have a dream of an arranged marriage with a lesbian. These are strategies different from the ones Woods (1993) discusses. Bora also reported that he is asked the marriage questions generally once a month at work and when the pressure of these questions increases, he fabricates a fiancé working in a different city.

Bora is working as an academician in a university in a conservative city. Bora reported that it is necessary to be careful about disclosing his sexual orientation in such a conservative environment. He reported that his work environment is also conservative since the professors reflect their traditionalist points of view to the curriculum of their lessons and that they make humiliating remarks about other professors who are known as being feminist. Also reported is: “I am especially afraid of to be found out because my tone of voice which can be seen as feminine.” Çetin used to work as a bank employee in a big city and he defined his work place environment as not as conservative, but as homophobic. He believes that there had not been any suspicions about him until his former boyfriend intentionally disclosed him at his workplace. Çetin and Bora use ‘fabricating a lover’ strategy in order to preserve their hidden status. Also, Sevgi’s work environment is homophobic and she is already stigmatized as a lesbian at work. Therefore, Bora and Sevgi use the strategy of fabricating a full-fledged relationship since their identity is a matter of suspicion, while Çetin only applies the strategy of altering the gender pronouns since his identity is not as suspected as the others’. Also, the pressure of questions on Bora and Sevgi regarding marriage is greater since their work places are more conservative.

In the following section, I discuss “Imitating Heterosexuality in Nonverbal and Verbal Features” as a form of the coping strategy of “Construction a Fake Heterosexual Identity”.

5.1.1.3. Imitating Heterosexuality in Nonverbal and Verbal Features

Lesbians and gays transform their gender specific pronouns to the pronouns which are gender appropriate in bodily expressions, speaking or tone of voice in order to hide their sexual orientation in work life. As J. Weeks points out "the body can no longer be seen as a biological given which emits its own meaning. It must be understood instead as an ensemble of potentialities which are given meaning only in society." (Cited in Franke, 1995: 71) How people appear has a sociocultural meaning based on sex roles, gender norms and so it is ‘gendered’. Color or types of clothes, jewelry such as earrings, style of pinning these, length of hair, hair style, having a beard or not and its style are indicators saying something about our gender appropriateness. When we look at a person whom we see for first time, we analyze these indicators. As West Zimmerman (1987) points out, when a person sees a person, she/he automatically starts to analyze her/his gender and needs to define this aspect of the person first. If people cannot define this person as ‘a man’ or ‘a woman’, it becomes a problem. For this reason, people can stigmatize LGBT people as ‘abnormal’, or ridicule or humiliate them because of their appearance, based on the stigmas regarding the gay and lesbian image in society.

According to Eicher and Roach-Higgins (1992), dressing is a strong tool allowing people to express themselves in terms of gender roles and it is a way of communication. In most workplaces, employers expect employees to dress and appear as gender-appropriate. For instance, in professional work life, while white collar women may be expected to wear makeup and dress well (Carol & Pollard, 1993: 47); men may be expected to wear serious attire such as a suit in a color of black, gray or navy blue. Thus, lesbians and gays who hide their homosexuality and

try to appear to be heterosexuals adopt the manner of dress which heterosexual people consider to be gender-appropriate.

Bora, an academician, Karatay, a fashion designer, Ferhat, an engineer, and Derya, a lawyer in a private company, try to be gender-appropriate in terms of their appearance in different degrees and ways. While Bora was a research assistant in the Social Sciences in a non-conservative university, he had longhair, wore earrings and smart scarves. However, when he started working in his current conservative university, he changed his appearance completely; however, this transformation did not happen immediately. Before starting work at this university, he first got a haircut and took off his earrings as a precaution. However, in his first days in the university, he had continued to wear scarves and he reported that “When I was wearing a scarf, there were glances and ridicule, so I gave it up.” He reported how he transformed his style of dressing to the dress style of a heterosexual male in order to hide his sexual orientation at work:

I try to dress as a teacher. I usually wear scotch plaid shirt and trousers. Because by dressing like a teacher, I am saving the day. For example, I like wearing earrings very much, but I can't wear these in most environments and I take them off. Wearing earrings and other pieces of jewelry are typical symbols in terms of being gay. They are the most apparent symbol of being gay in the eyes of heterosexuals. I wear glasses usually when I am working in the university. I don't have any problem with my eyes; my glasses are not prescription glasses and have number of zero.

Ferhat reported that he cannot wear the shirts which he wears in daily life. He is afraid of being spotlighted and ridiculed. He said “I don't wear red pants at work, for instance, and also I have a black t-shirt with rhinestones on it. I cannot wear it at work, for instance. In fact, I wear it everywhere else. It is not possible to wear it at work because people would laugh at it and it would attract attention.” He also reported one day he come across a high level manager in elevator and the manager had said “Don't wear that kind of shoes, wear the shoes like the ones I do.” indicating his black and bright patent leather shoes.

Ferhat reported that the manager had warned another male employee, who wears a kind of bracelet and asked him to take it off since it is feminine. Ferhat thinks that the manager has an image of a heterosexual man in his mind and he would like all male employees to fit this form. Ferhat is a friend of mine from work life whom I see at break times often and so I know he rarely wears red and pink shirts or sweaters at work.

Karatay, a fashion designer in a firm where he believes there is a risk of homophobic treatment by the treatment against other gay men reported that he does not wear clothes with any connotation of homosexuality, such as trousers in the color of tile or pink. He believes that since he already dresses smartly, if his clothes bring homosexuality to mind, he can be branded directly as 'gay'. He manages a team who produces his designs and he believes that if he is found out, he would lose his authority over them:

Although style of dress is so much freer in my industry, people in this country don't say "This is a fashion designer". There are lots of young men who are fashionably dressed on the streets, but I am careful about how I dress I am a 'polite' guy and my 'label' has already been prepared. People at work whispering of about my dress, manner of speaking, etc. may overshadow my other qualities. I think my earrings, the length of my hair, the color of my trousers shouldn't be talked about when I have many other qualities which could be. I was one of first people who wore earrings in the nineties. However, I didn't wear these at work. I think it destroys the work discipline. I use concealer on my face, but I never use it at work.

Bora reported that he is a feminine gay, and he has some feminine aspects, like moving his hips while walking and his tone of voice. Karatay did not directly report that he is a feminine gay; however, he expressed that some of his features, like his smart speaking style, is an indicator which can cause him to be labeled as 'gay'. Ferhat reported that "I see myself as masculine. I am growing a beard, I build my muscles and I love these kinds of things.". To the extent that gays and lesbians have qualities which are different from the gender norms of the society and have connotations of homosexuality, the possibility of being found out and the risk of discriminatory treatment becomes greater. Thus, in terms of being gender appropriate

in style of dress, Bora and Karatay are more obsessive compared to Ferhat, who believes he is generally perceived as heterosexual. Some of the lesbian respondents have some concerns about gender appropriateness. Derya who is a lawyer, reported:

When I was young, there were times at which I didn't change my behavior and was masculine. Now, I don't care. Now, how I behave depends on how I feel at that time. Sometimes I wear a men's shirt, then I ask myself "I wonder if wearing it isn't a little bit absurd?" Then I say to myself "Drop it!" and wear it anyway. Mostly, I wear unisex clothes. Wearing feminine things depends on the requirements.

Some other lesbian respondents expressed that they do not have any concern for being gender appropriate. Asiye, who is working in a professional association, reported:

I think the clothes which are thought as appropriate for women by society are not comfortable. When you dress like that, you are perceived as more masculine. In fact, there is no such thing; I love to dress in which I feel fine. I dress unisex at work as I am wearing now and nothing happens related to my sexual orientation, but our tea-maker treats me like a kite.

I found that lesbians, who have a style of dress inappropriate to gender norms, are less obsessive compared to gays. This demonstrates that there isn't a lesbian stereotype in society in terms of dress. According to Ferhat, the homosexual stereotype in society is a passive gay which appears to be the same as the gay image in the media and in this stereotype, lesbianism does not exist. This argument is relevant to the invisibility of lesbians in society.

Since the body is a cultural constitution out of its physical meaning (Butler, 1993), bodily behavior such as gestures and mimics can be indicators in terms of sexual orientation similar to appearance. According to Foucault, "Bodies only appear, only endure, only live within the production constraints of certain highly gendered regulatory schemas." (cited in Sinclair, 2005: 92). Thus, most of the work places have some expectations in terms of "acceptable bodily behaviors" (Collinson, 1992, 1994 cited in Sinclair, 2005: 93). İsmail, who is a research assistant, reported:

It is very hard to know what is feminine and what is masculine. I examined what is feminine on me. I got obsessed about it so much. It is very hard for me to examine myself, so I ask people around me. For instance, behavior of crossing the legs. I had talked about my concern on this issue with my thesis advisor. My advisor associated my style with the long length of my legs. I don't know what else I can do. It is very hard to look at myself from the outside. I think I am trying not to cross my legs in the university where I work. I recognized I move my neck so much. I am careful about that. When I am talking to my professors, I find that I unconsciously constrain the use of my arms I try to widen this use at times. The placement of my arms with respect to my body. I think that being a man is to occupy more space.

In addition, İsmail reported when he is at the university where he works that he tries increase the visibility of his chest hair since this is an indicator of masculinity. Karatay also controls his gestures at work: "I do not lean anywhere. If I lean anywhere, I will be 'queer', but if Şükrü (his manager) leans in the same way, nothing happens. When I speak to Şükrü, I cross my arms and stand upright. Because my label is ready..."

İsmail has thought about gender-based bodily aspects in order to imitate, and has even read articles on femininity and masculinity in the university's library and he is practicing in front of the mirror:

Sometimes I practice in front of the mirror. In order to prepare myself to environments where it is necessary to present myself as a heterosexual. If you had interviewed me two months ago, I would have been much more confused about these matters. I thought I looked like a heterosexual. About a month ago, a friend asked a friend of mine from the Faculty of History and Languages if I were gay. This person is someone who has very close relationships with the professors, and therefore, I would not consider disclosing to him. This really worried me. I want to decide who I will disclose too. But I guess I failed, I think I am still under the effect of this incident. The practicing in front of the mirror started after this incident.

According to "Social Cognitive Learning Model" of Lidderdale et al. (2007) identity management strategies is also a learning process formed in time by the factors like 'social context', 'cognition' and 'behavior' (cited in Croteau et al., 2008). İsmail is

trying to learn how to manage his identity after he is influenced some events which show him that he has some indicators. Similarly after the ridiculous reactions, Bora had transformed his dressing style in time in the conservative university.

Another aspect of the communication style occurs in both verbal and nonverbal in speaking, tone of voice and rhetoric which gays use in order to hide their sexuality. Tune of voice which is a nonverbal way of communication is a declatory element for gay people. (Rodríguez González, 2008: 233) Most of the researches show that people perceives the tune of voice of gays as an indicator in terms of the sexual orientation (Renn, 2003, Travis, 1981; Gaudio, 1994; Linville, 1998). According to Renn (2003), Kulick (2000) and Shaw & Ferris (1883) this perception mostly springs from the prejudgments of society based on the stereotypes about gays. For this reason, tune of voice is one of the instructors that have the risk of revealing their sexual orientation for the respondents who believes that their tune of voice is different from the tune of heterosexual men and out of the gender norms and so for white collar gays. Relatively, it can cause risk of discrimination as Ferhat reported:

In the society and culture there is an image like that: The people whose voices are weak are passive people and they cannot manage in fact, they should be managed. So, I think I blended into background in management appointments just because of this sexual orientation culture.

So they use the strategy of speaking in a more masculine, deeper and lower tone of voice in the work place in order to present themselves as gender appropriate as a precaution against homophobic treatment in heterosexist work environments.

İsmail started to practice in order to be able to speak in a more masculine tone after a call center employee called him “Miss” during the call and he reported that since this event “it almost became an obsession”. He also reported that: “I try to behave like a heterosexual and speak with a deep voice during lessons and when I am speaking to my students and professors.” Karatay also reported: “I do not extend the words when

I speak; instead I speak with a more serious and clear tone. Of course, I am more relaxed when I am with my friends.

Unlike lesbians, most gay men use different tonality when speaking from that of heterosexual males (Renn, 2003, Rodríguez González, 2008: 235). None of my lesbian respondents were concerned about their identities being revealed because of the tone of their voices.

Some of my gay respondents use the strategy of avoiding using the words that they use in their private life, and instead, utilize the strategy of using the words mostly used by heterosexual men such as ‘*Abi*’ (A form of addressing a man used in man-to-man conversations in order to express familiarity; it is an shortened form of the word ‘*ağabey*’ which in everyday language means ‘older brother’), which are the elements of a common language which create a network between heterosexual men as Bora reported. In Bora’s words:

You speak to men whose age is equal to or older than your age as ‘*Abi*’. You immediately play the role of man to man talk or you say ‘Hey, my friend, how are you?’ You don’t say the words like “My honey”, “My love” etc. Whereas I love using these words so much.

Karatay reported, referring to a gay friend whom he defines as feminine:

For instance, Özkan says ‘*bacimmm*¹¹’. After a while, you get accustomed to it. Once I called my clothier and I hung up, saying “Kisses”. Why would I say this? “Byess” also becomes a habit. You try to compensate next time.

¹¹This is an expression that is derived from the word ‘*bacı*’ which means ‘sister’ in Turkish. In its cultural context, this word is used to address or refer to an actual sister, any person close enough to be considered as a sister or occasionally a respectful form of addressing a woman. The word ‘*bacım*’, according to the rules of Turkish language, is in the form of the first person singular possessive pronoun and literally means ‘**my** sister’. The form ‘*bacimmm*’ is a special drawn out form which emphasizes the final consonant and is used by gays in conversations amongst themselves. I recorded this expression as an example of the special context-specific and culturally coded speech which was reported as being used within this subcultural group by some of my gay respondents.

As Griffin (1992) argues, I found that counterfeiting strategies may cause loss of self-integrity, for instance, not being able to use the words used in private life in daily life.

Sevgi reported she imitates heterosexist rhetoric which denigrates LGBT people as a strategy for hiding:

One of my female colleagues talked about a woman, saying something like “what a nice woman she was” and then dropped a hint to me. I don’t know whether if they can catch on somehow. I could not understand. I say “Are you a bisexual or something like that?” And she answered as “What will happen if I am like that?” This is my new strategy. I say “Are you a psycho?” or something like that. I close that aspect of me at the workplace.

In this way, Sevgi tries to demonstrate that she complies with gender norms which are heterosexist. Based on the definition of Ebert (2001) “Defensive strategies include behaviors like avoidance of threatening situations”, I found that fabricating strategies can also be a ‘defensive strategy’, Griffin (1992), Woods (1993), Clair et al. (2005) do not mention this aspect of identity management strategies.

I have dealt with the strategies that are used by lesbians and gay employees. In the following sections, I discuss “Revealing Sexual Orientation” strategy with its subsections.

5.2. Revealing Sexual Orientation

The disclosure decision is more related with how a lesbian or gay person perceives the discrimination (Chung, 2001). ‘Perception of discrimination’ has connotations with the elements constituting ‘self’ and the ‘its relation to the social construction in the work environment’, for instance in terms of “honesty and integrity at the personal level” as Humphrey pointed out (as cited in Ward & Winstanley, 2005).

Theories of Griffin (1992) and Woods (1993) are the antecedents of identity management strategy theories and they first developed the ‘self’ and the ‘its relation to the social construction in the work environment’ in terms of revealing decisions. Griffin (1992) divides revealing strategies into two categories, one of which is being ‘implicitly out’ that involves “being honest about one’s life but ‘not explicitly labeling oneself as lesbian or gay’” and one of the other is being ‘explicitly out’ that involves “being honest about one’s life and explicitly identifying to others that one is lesbian or gay” (Anderson et al., 2001: 245). Woods (1993) gathers these two revealing strategies into one concept under the name of ‘integration’ that involves “the individual reveals his or her true sexual identity and attempts to manage the consequences” (Chrobot-Mason, 2002: 323). While Griffin argues that “sense of integrity” is high, Woods (1993) refers to a kind of capability for ‘risk taking’ in terms of the strategy of revealing. Also, while Griffin (1992) defines the disclosure action as disclosing to everybody at the work place, Woods (1993) determines that some of the gays and lesbians disclose to selected people at work whom they trust.

Following the theories of “Stigma-Based Interpersonal Diversity Disclosure Model” of Clair et al. (2005), “Stigma-Based Home-Work Disclosure Model” of Ragins (2004; 2008) and “Learned Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Outcome Expectations Model” of Lidderdale, et. al. (2007) focuses on ‘self’ and the ‘its relation to the social construction in the work environment’ in terms of revealing decisions comprehensively and in detail. Because of the limitations in the data collected in my field work, I used the theories of Griffin and Woods basically to discuss the experiences of disclosure of the respondents and used the other theories to support the discussion.

In the following sections, I discuss “Being Implicitly Out” and “Being Explicitly Out” as forms of the strategy of “Revealing Sexual Orientation”.

5.2.1. Being Implicitly Out

Some lesbians and gays do not do anything special to hide their sexual orientation, yet they also don't say anything about their sexual orientation, so they are implicitly out (Griffin, 1992). One of my lesbian respondents Esra, who is a manager of software team in a university made a comment that defined the main idea of this strategy well: "When I am not doing anything in order to hide my identity, I am open. Being open is to know that I won't hide my identity when this issue is mentioned." Derya, who is the lawyer of a company and a LGBT NGO, has written on LGBT issues and made statements on TV, reported that:

I do not think that I comply with the society's standard for women in terms of dress and position; I do not think that I have the features of femininity which are in accordance with the expectations of femininity. I wrote a receipt for a LGBT NGO. The auditor of the company saw them. 'Gay and lesbian' is written on them. I also make statement for some journals and go on some television channels. However, I try to stay out of the mainstream media. So, I do not have a concern like "Oh, nobody should hear about it." But I do not share this in the work place, since I do not share anything else about my private life. They can guess since I am not so close to norms of femininity.

Derya, who is a LGBT activist, does not change her appearance and does not constrain herself in her daily life. Derya may be considered to be a kind of 'gender traitor', based on the Hopkins's (2009) definition: "A gender traitor can be thought of as anyone who violates the "rules" of gender identity/gender performance, i.e., someone who rejects or appears to reject the criteria by which the genders are differentiated." As she expresses her relationship with a LGBT NGO through receipts and she continues to make statements to some journals and TV channels, she is honest about her life and uses the strategy of being 'implicitly out' as revealing her identity to some degree. She 'attempts to manage the consequences' since she believes that the work place is not safe enough to be 'explicitly out'. The Woods'

‘integration’ strategy also comprises the ‘being implicitly out’ strategy of Griffin and he argues that “lesbian and gay individuals may share some information with their colleagues indirectly way to allow them to know their sexual orientation” (1993). Derya expresses her sexual orientation indirectly through the receipts of the LGBT NGO, as Woods argues (1993).

According to Griffin (1992), “most workers employ multiple identity management strategies” and Croteau et al., (2008), “complex process involving numerous daily choices about revealing and/or concealing.” We can see in the comments of Derya that she is using both the ‘avoidance’ strategy (Woods, 1993) and ‘implicitly out strategy’ because she gives statements only to some media and avoids the mainstream ones.

Rıdvan, who has a graduate degree in Political Science and is responsible for Public Information in an IT Project in a university, is a LGBT activist. In the work place, there are a total of fifteen people at work, who are part-time employees who are undergraduate or graduate students and administrative personnel and. He believes that his work place is safer than most of the other places:

The work place is safer for me. Nobody can inflict violence on me there. If you say it in a *kahvehane* (this word is used for cafes of which customers are only men in Turkey), they may lynch me. So the work place is safer for me. At the most, they may gossip about me.

However, he reports that while he does not hide his sexual orientation, he does not frankly express it: “I do not hide it, but I am not explicitly out.”

As explained in the examples on ‘being implicitly out’ at work referred to in the work by Woods (1993), Rıdvan is honest about his life and sometimes gives information indirectly about his homosexual identity; for example, he talks about a LGBT NGO or does not avoid showing that he is outside of the norms of masculinity expected by the society, such as joining in the conversations of women:

I am showing Nazlı (one of his woman colleagues) and I say, for instance “Look, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual community” when we are looking at something from internet. Also, I join the conversations of to Zehra and others’ (other female colleagues).

Rıdvan pointed out that it is important for him to say the abbreviation LGBT in its extended form since he is involved in its politics: “It is important for me to express it openly as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transsexual. It is important because of my political standpoint. People do not understand when we say LGBT. It is a way of expressing our existence.” Rıdvan reveals his identity implicitly in order to “create a social change” as one of the positively “anticipated consequences” mentioned by Ragins (2004, 2008).

Erdal who graduated from the Faculty of Law and has worked in field projects on social issues, as a trainee in an advocate’s office and in different blue collar jobs, had been implicitly out to colleagues when he was working as a cashier at a bookstore. Erdal reported that one of his female colleagues was a close friend and he introduced his partner to her first as a friend in order to disclose to her in the future:

My colleague became acquainted with my partner, but we did not talk about this issue. Everybody was behaving like friends. . Because, I didn’t know whether she was ready to know or be aware of this kind of thing. I was introducing her to my friends, who are disclosed to everybody. Now, saying “I am not heterosexual” remains in our dialogue.

Erdal reported that he would like to frankly talk about his sexual orientation to his colleague, but he was afraid that she was not ready to face this issue and of losing her friendship. His concern to reveal his identity was for establishing “closer interpersonal relationships” as one of the positively “anticipated consequences” which is referred to in Ragins’ theory (2004, 2008).

Gays and lesbians also choose the people to whom they can be implicitly out and Rıdvan’s criteria is being less conservative or having a close relationship:

There was an application that is related with our business of a LGBT NGO and I directly went to İdil. There were Nazlı and Ayşe, but I did not go to them because they are more conservative. For instance, I asked Mercan “Let’s enter Facebook and share the announcement of a demonstration by our LGBT community.” She is studying Physics and it cannot be said that she is sensitive, but I said it through the comfort of an older brother – younger sister relationship.

Sometimes there is a transformation from the ‘being implicitly out status’ to ‘being explicit out status’, as Rıdvan reported: “İdil guessed my sexual orientation through those conversations, then she asked me and I disclosed to her.” Also, Erdal plans to be explicitly out to his female colleague when the conditions are ready. Therefore, I argue that there is ‘fluidity between coping strategies’.

Some lesbians and gays choose to be being explicitly out in terms of sexual orientation instead of being implicitly out to some selected people or everybody at work place depending of the degree of safety in the work place and their self-integration behaviors. In the following sections, I discuss “Being Explicitly Out” as a form of the strategy of “Revealing Sexual Orientation”.

5.2.2. Being Explicitly Out

Lesbian and gay professionals may like to choose to express their sexual orientation openly at the work place. Griffin's concept "explicitly out" (1992) and Woods' concept "integration" (1993) explains this type of coping strategy. Griffin conceptualizes it as a status which is the most risky in terms of "fear of discrimination".

At the beginning of this study, I assumed that academicians in Turkey, especially the ones at the Departments of Social Sciences, could work in the 'explicitly out' status. However İrfan, who was a research assistant in the Social Sciences in another university, says that whereas the environment of Social Science Faculties are 'safe' compared to other universities in terms of discrimination against LGBT people, LGBT issues are often discussed by academicians and students in those faculties and it is not acceptable to speak in homophobic terms, 'an explicitly out status' is not possible for academicians even in these faculties. İrfan reported that: "A homosexual person who is working in the Social Sciences area may work on LGBT issues, but is it possible for her/ him to be with his male or female lover in the environment of the university?". This shows how widespread homophobia is in Turkey. İrfan also explains this situation as: "It is like the 'domestication' of homosexuality" His comment means that homosexuality is accepted as long as it is not expressed 'explicitly'. This shows how homosexuality is 'marginalized' even in areas which respondents comparably perceive as safe, such as the Social Sciences areas in academia.

Revealing the sexual orientation identity depends on some factors (Clair et al. 2005, Ragins 2004; 2008, Lidderdale et al., 2007) and there are a number of reasons why people decide to come out (Humphrey, 1999). The reasons for coming out stated by the respondents that are: to be honest, not to be assumed as being a heterosexual, to

establish a close relationships with colleagues to whom she/he feels close and wishes to share her/his private life, to work comfortably with the colleagues with whom she/he is working directly with, to turn those colleagues into allies, or for the reasons of being in love with a colleague or as a political action, etc. Thus, white collar lesbians and gays do not disclose suddenly without a reason as Erdal, who worked on field projects on social issues, as a trainee in an advocate's office and in different blue collar jobs reported: "I say if there is a conversation about homosexuality; I am not going to jump in and say 'I am a homosexual!'"

Griffin conceptualizes the 'being explicitly out' status as being open to everybody in the workplace. However, this generalization is not in accordance with the experiences of most of the respondents, who are 'explicitly out' to only trustworthy people at work as Woods (1993) argues.

Some of the respondents reveal their identities in order to "create a social change" as one of the positively "anticipated consequences" which is mentioned in Ragins' theory (2004, 2008). Erdal reported that sometimes he directly reveals his homosexual identity as a reaction to homophobic comments at work environment to change the minds of the people whom he believes to be homophobic.

In a field research project, we were organizing room meetings. If anybody says something homophobic, I used to ask "I am a homosexual, won't you work with me now?" I like this actually; this is a good weapon. I used to mean "You drunk with me, did something, and slept in the same room with me. What will you do now?" In this way, I shake up people in front of me and push them to think.

According to Woods (1993), they disclose directly during breaks or disclose when those colleagues make statements as if they were heterosexual. Rıdvan expressed that

he revealed himself since he is irritated by being assumed to be heterosexual and he first implicitly disclosed to a woman colleague and then explicitly during a break:

One day, in our break time, İdil was talking about a gay friend and used the expression “sexual choice” and I said her “It is not a choice exactly, in fact, it is an orientation”. She said “Is it an orientation? I am very sorry about my comment”. In this way, I became disclosed to her and then we talked. Actually, since I hate being assumed to be a heterosexual, I am bringing it out into the open in a way.

İdil’s comment about homosexuality is a widespread approach on homosexuals. According to Herek (1992), ignoring the existence of that which is outside of heterosexuality is heterosexism. Therefore, İdil’s comment is heterosexist because she believes that everybody is born as a heterosexual, a person can be a homosexual only with her/his wishes, and in this way, she denies the innate existence of homosexuality. Similar to Erdal, Rıdvan also has the concern to create social change through disclosure. Creating social change has also been discussed in Ragins’ theory (2004, 2008) as a reason for disclosure; another related reason for disclosure is to increase the awareness of colleagues on sexual minorities, as dealt with in Humprey’s (1999: 138) and Clair et al.’s (2002: 1402) research.

Lesbians and gays may disclose their identities mostly in order to make “closer interpersonal relationships” at work as Ragins (2004, 2008) argues in “positively anticipated consequences” concept, or as Clair et al. (2005) argues in “personal motives” concept. Ferhat reported that: “If I would like to be a close friend with somebody, I disclose my identity to that person in work place. Because in order to be close to somebody, you should share something about your private life.” Çetin reported that he disclosed to two of his female colleagues at work and that this created a positive change in his work life:

My walls expanded. For example, I used to say to myself regarding something in my private life “Once I get out of the workplace, I will be able to talk to

someone.” Now I can talk to my friends to whom I have disclosed. When our relationship with Emre broke up, Canan even tried to get us back together, saying” Here, take this film and watch it together.

Asiye who is a translator in a professional association reported that disclosing at work occurred once she is assumed as a heterosexual:

After three years, I disclosed to other colleagues. We talk during lunch break, you know. We have a place in the back; during smoking...during these conversations.. In a coffee fortune-telling occasion, for instance, talking about men, etc. I disclosed while we were there.

Esra who is a technical team manager in a university reported that the By-law of university has an article on discrimination based on sexual orientation and the President of which is sensitive on discrimination against all minorities in Turkey (Esra showed me the Twitter messages of the President on this issue). She reported that there are some gay people in the university whose sexual orientation can be easily found out since they are effeminate and one of them is working at a managerial position, and is a very successful and popular employee at the university. She reports that she is not worried about experiencing discrimination or harassment and disclosing to her colleagues so much at this workplace; in other words, this school is a safe place for her. So, one day she discloses her identity directly at a lunch with her colleagues.

One day one of my colleagues had asked me a question at a crowded table. The answer I could give necessitated starting with “My girlfriend...” and I said this sentence directly. Then another person said – by chance my girlfriend had come to my work place just few days ago – “Is she your girlfriend?” and I said “Yes”. She added, “Very pretty girl.” And I answered “According to me, too”.

As Woods (1993) states, Esra discloses when colleagues assume that she is a heterosexual. Her own understanding is also influential on this behavior since she believes that a person is open when she/he doesn't need to disclose; for instance, having a girlfriend is natural for her and she is not concerned about what other people will think. In other words, if the others are concerned, it is their own business.

Another reason for being explicitly out is to confront the perpetrators so as to react to their heterosexist comments or apply to legal remedies in order to challenge and end discrimination at work, as Chung (2001) explained in his 'confrontation' concept in his four steps of coping strategy model. Elçin, who has a high school degree and was enrolled in the Social Sciences at a university previously, and now is responsible of academic studies in a LGBT NGO as she had experienced harassment by one of her heterosexual male managers when she was working in a café as a senior waiter. He rudely referred to lesbianism and offered to have sex so as to remedy her being a lesbian. She became angry and reported this to the other managers, his wife and some of the other employees at that café, whom supported her and as a result the harassment ended.

Gays and lesbians mostly choose to whom they will be 'explicitly out'. Çetin (32, license degree in Administration, Bank Employee) disclosed to his colleague whom he felt close to and believed was reliable since she had a gay friend and therefore was not homophobic as he does not like to be accepted as heterosexual. Çetin reported about his disclosure experience to this colleague:

I knew one of my colleagues to whom I disclosed had gay friends. She herself does not live like a normal girl. She comes to work saying "My grandmother has died" and then she goes on a yacht tour. She also has gay friends and so I was able to talk about my homosexuality more comfortably. One day, I went to this colleague's home for dinner. Her boyfriend was there. I was really

drunk and I said during the conversation “That can’t be so because I am gay”. I expressed it just like that. My colleague asked if I would have liked to share this with a female colleague who is another close friend of us and I said it was all right.

Similar to Çetin, some of my gay and lesbian respondents also stated that disclosing decisions to selected colleagues may take years since they test the degree of reliability of those people. Sevgi reported that she disclosed to one of her colleagues whom she chose as an ‘ally’ after six years and Asiye reported that she disclosed to women colleagues after three years.

I have dealt with the strategies for hiding and revealing that lesbian and gay employees use in worklife in the based on the key determinants as the safety degree of the workplace, self-intergration expectations and degree of ‘*sexual orientation indicators*’ in terms of having connations with homosexuality. To struggle with discrimination and/or to satisfy the needs of expressing the sexual orientation white collar lesbians and gays use some other strategies. One of them is “Being in Solidarity” with the other LGB employees and in the following section I talk over this strategy.

5.3. Being in Solidarity

I found that there is solidarity between gays and lesbians during their period of recruitment and after employment. In terms of recruitment, Derya reported that she worked in a factory and that she had helped a gay friend get a job there. She also reported:

It happened to a friend recently. I do not know how it happened. His link with Kaos became known. I believe that when an institution searched for him by name, it came out that the owner of the business who called my friend for an interview was gay and it was really obvious that he called for this interview because my friend was gay. However, he did not hire my friend. Perhaps he

would have if he thought that it was a good idea. There is some solidarity between LGBT people, but how many of these own a business?

In this comment, I found that solidarity can increase the chances of lesbians and gays for a job interview, but qualifications are an important factor during employment processes with respect to the interests of the employer. Furthermore, the number of self-employed lesbians and gays is not very high.

Some of the respondents reported that there is solidarity between lesbians when they are working together. For instance, they influence or support each other in disclosure decisions at work. Çetin, who was working in a bank and was fired because of his sexual orientation, reported that he helped a friend who was a policeman and had been fired because of his sexual orientation to get help from the advocate of the LGBT NGO who took his case.

Risk of homophobic discrimination at work creates a pressure of hiding sexual orientation identity. Because of this hiding status, lesbians and gays experience isolation at work place and they are generally disclosed to only a few people at work (KaosGL, 2009). Thus, this situation obliges lesbians and gays to ghettoize in some particular work spheres where most of the people are lesbian and gay and they can disclose their gender aspects comfortably and there is 'solidarity' between LGB people. Ridvan reported how ghettoization of LGBT people occurs:

Ghettoization arises from a necessity. When you are excluded from various life spheres, you create new life sphere for yourself. You feel stronger when you are together. You would like to be with people like you. In this case you rent a house from Cihangir though your salary is not so high. Because you search for a place where you feel peaceful. You do not want to be stigmatized every moment. For instance, transsexual individuals who experience problems with work life and social life find place themselves in Bornova Street or in Bayram Street. As a result, so to say, the ghettos in cities become inevitable. We can think similarly for work life.

Most of the respondents reported that gays are mostly ghettoized in sectors like retailing and fashion. In Bora's words through an anecdote:

One of my gay friends who is director in retailing sector and another friend who is doctor and married with children met at a breakfast in my home. My doctor friend asked the gay one if he could enter the sectors like retailing, ready-made and fashion. My director friend immediately said "No, you cannot enter". My doctor friend said "You say "no" without trying to know me and evaluate if I had talent". He said "It is not necessary, because you are not gay. In order to enter this sector and get advancement, you should be gay. We dominate in this sphere." My doctor friend said "Wow! Is there a place where we experience discrimination?" The other friend said "We are not at ease in the other sectors; we support each other in these sectors. Besides, being gay is an advantage since gays have creativeness and sense of art, as well as an understanding of what a woman likes. It is believed that heterosexuals do not have sophistication or a sense of art."

Based on the comments of Ayşegül, who has work experience in a LGBT NGO, and the comments of Elçin, who is working as an expert in a LGBT NGO and was also a manager in a gay pub, I found that LGBT people dominated in these workplaces. In these workplaces, they can express their own culture, for instance they can freely use the language of 'Lubunya' which is a language specific to their own minority culture. In Bora's words:

"One of my friends was 'Visual Design Director' in a foreign company in ready-made clothing sector. When I went to his firm, all the employees ranging from lowest level sales clerks to the store managers were gay. They were dressed very comfortable; they were not obliged to hide their sexual orientation, they were using the language Lubunya freely between them. My friend was working in the court house before entering his current sector. He was continuously talking about the difficulties he experienced there. Joining the conversations on football match, on women, etc. He was careful about his behavior and conversations in order to hide himself. He has been at ease in this sector. In so much that, he can go to gay pubs with his colleagues.

I found that, like other minorities, lesbians and gays are ghettoized in specific work spheres. In those places, they do not feel the pressure of having to hide and can express their gender aspects and feel happy and peaceful. Thus, as Griffin (1992) argues, being able to be explicitly out is the most advantageous 'self-integration'. According to my respondents, heterosexuals might be discriminated or excluded from the ghettos in work life in Turkey.

Chung (2001) gives place to "social support strategy" in his "Discriminatory Management Model" and defines it as "discussing experience with other people". As Chung argues, some of the respondents reported that they use this strategy following discriminatory treatment. Selin, who works in a gallery, reported that a female colleague supported her when she discussed her experiences of harassment by a painter and her manager after disclosing her lesbianism to them: "I told her about the painter during my disclosure and sharing with her was good for me. She told me: "He is a foolish man, pay no mind" which made me feel better. When I talked about the situation of my manager, she was supportive."

I found that some lesbian and gay respondents choose only one trustworthy person as an 'ally who acts as 'a pressure relief valve as a precaution to discriminatory treatment' in cases of perceived discrimination as a 'solidarity' strategy. Chung (2001) argues that lesbians and gays get social support just after encountering discrimination. Ragins (2004, 2008) does not refer to in her theory that 'choosing an ally' is a reason for disclosure. Sevgi, who is a teacher in public school, reported that: "I certainly have an ally. Because she is a 'pressure relief valve' at work". She reported that she discussed a possible situation that could disclose her by an ex-girlfriend who tried to reach her by calling the school:

She found me through the internet. I panicked. She called the school. I immediately called my girlfriend and talked with my ally at the school

regarding what I should do about my close friends. We managed to find a way and resolve the matter. Because she can reach the school and disclose me.

Bora reported that while he was working as a research assistant in a non-conservative university, he chose his thesis advisor as an ally. His advisor was the only person that Bora disclosed to apart from his boyfriend and some other gay students at work. He reported his conversation with his advisor:

Will you stand by me if I am disclosed in the future, my identity is disclosed, if I am harmed? There should be someone to say that I am good at my work and my studies. There should be someone who would defend me saying that he knew about my identity but that despite it, I was good at my work. I asked him if he would defend me. Just in case something happens in the future or I am investigated. I said to myself that there should be someone who would say that he knew about my identity, he worked with me with this knowledge, that I was very good at my work and that I was respectable regarding my identity and my private life.

Due to the stress of being a member of a minority group, based on a ‘perceived stigma’ and ‘internalized homophobia’ (Meyer, 1995), Bora has an anxiety in terms of proving that he is not disruptive at work because of his identity. Also Bora’s stress is because he works in a public institution as the firing of gay men in public institution is more common in Turkey.

After discussing the strategy of being in solidarity in work life, in the following section I discuss the “Strategies in Job Searching”.

5.4. Strategies in Job Searching

Chung (2001) makes a categorization in his “Vocational Choice Model” that lesbians and gays use strategies, such as “self-employment” (being one's own boss to avoid discrimination), “job tracking” (examining whether an occupation or job position

welcomes LGBT workers and customers) and “risk taking”(selecting a vocational option knowing that there will be risk for discrimination) and he argues that lesbians and gays use those strategies because of perceived discrimination.

Some of the informants reported that they are tracking for jobs which have a sensitive to LGBT issues particularly discrimination against them. Asiye who is a translator in a professional association reported on the work places she planned to apply: “I want to work in an institution that officially recognizes LGBT people. For example, certain Consulates ask about sexual orientation in their application forms, and recognize some NGO’s.”

Selin, who worked as a journalist in the mainstream media, which she defines as sexist and heteronormative, reported that:

I am looking at digital agencies. For example, journalist who work at social media, such as twitter or facebook. You are obliged to give a twitter link when applying for work regarding this matter. Since I shared everything on twitter I was worried about applying to these places, but then I realized that digital agencies are people like us. They are very likely to support LGBT rights and there probably are homosexuals amongst them.

Some of my informants reported that they take the risk and work in whatever areas they would like to work. I found that those respondents are lesbians and gays who are activists, at peace with their identity and are empowered by their knowledge on claiming their rights through international courts when they applying to areas with potential for discrimination. In Devrim’s words:

I do not constrain myself in the context of sexual orientation regarding my professional aspirations. I could apply for public service. If I have any problems due to my homosexuality, I will pursue my rights in all ways possible. Since no one can openly discriminate and violate the law, no one can really do anything if you take the risk and come out. You can go to the ECtHR, and defend your rights.

After coping with the discriminatory treatment in job searching period, lesbians and gays use some other strategies during their work lives. One of them is ‘Being Hard Working’ and in the following section I discuss this strategy in the correlation of women’s experiences in terms of this strategy in Turkey.

5.5. Being Hard Working

Lesbians and gays use some other strategies in their work lives. One of the strategies that some of my respondents used is to be hard-working in the work place, like other minorities. According to (Ecevit et. al, 2003), women use ‘hard working’ strategy in order to balance their duties in the domestic area and work in order to prove that their duties in private life are not an impediment to carrying out the duties at work. Lordođlu & Aslan (2012) argue that Kurdish people living East of Turkey work hard and do not complain about it, along with the other forms of discriminatory treatment, since it is hard to find a job. Ferhat, who works as an engineer reported:

There have been times when I have felt outside of the special language developed by heterosexuals. I feel that I compensate by my own struggles, by becoming more involved, by taking part in things in some way, by working more and by having more contacts.

For white collar lesbians and gays being hard working may not be enough to struggle the risk or occurrence of discrimination. Thereby, they may have to use “Being an Agreeable Person” strategy. In the following section I deal with this strategy.

5.6. Being an Agreeable Person

İsmail, who is a research assistant, reported that he uses the strategy of being an agreeable person along with the hard-working strategy. In his words:

I am also trying to be compliant. I try to work more and not make mistakes. I may be expressing criticism in a very polite way. I do not react much. I may have developed such a strategy.

Karatay reported that performing religious practices is a strategy as a precaution to possible discriminatory treatment:

If I went up to someone and said I am gay, nobody would be surprised. I am already surprised at myself for even talking. It does not sound like my own voice. In addition, I perform prayers. My being religious stops them. Perhaps, they think that homosexuality is not a bad thing because of me. I always perform my religious duties. I never miss Friday Prayers.

Because of the perceived stigmas on LGBT people, gay and lesbian employees cover their in-compliance with gender norms with trying to show themselves in compliance with the other norms in society. However, all the strategies that I have dealt with in this chapter may not be enough to cope with the anticipation and occurrence of discriminatory treatment. As a solution, lesbians and gays may apply to the way of quitting their jobs. In the following section, I approach this strategy.

5.7. Quitting

In order to earn a livelihood, lesbians and gays need to remain in their jobs. Resigning may be their final option. However, if a lesbian or gay professional cannot find any other way to cope with discrimination and harassment, quitting might be the best option. Chung (2001: 40) refers to quitting in his four types of coping strategy model. He argues that if discrimination causes so much pain that an employee cannot tolerate the situation at work place or the employee does not want anyone in the work place to learn about her/his sexual orientation she/he may choose to quit as a strategy. The respondent Cenk had worked in a labor union as a secretary. He had not been promoted to a higher position and as a result he resigned.

After that (he mentions the research assistant position in University) I was the secretary of a labor union. I had expectation of becoming a member of the permanent staff as an expert. Nevertheless, they did not give me this promotion. Why not? First of all, there are some dominant political groups. If you don't get involved in one of these groups, they don't promote or employ you. You have to become involved in the ÖDP (the Freedom and Solidarity

Party), Halk Ev or EMEP (Labour Party) or Kurdish politics. If you are not a member of one of them, then you are done for. Second, they will not give this promotion to a person who is explicitly out in terms of his homosexual identity. It would seem too immoral for them to express their actual views clearly since they are leftists and socialists, but they speak about my life style and my being untidy behind closed doors, etc.

Cenk had experienced discrimination in advancement to a higher position. He is discriminated against because he does not want to be a part of the political groups which are dominant in the union and he is openly gay. He reported that his life style was stigmatized as being disorganized though he is good at his job and carrying out the responsibilities. As a consequence of living in an environment of heterosexism, sexual minorities have been subject to deprecating attitudes that imply that these groups are inferior, reprobate and perverse, and have regretfully turned such negative messages onto themselves. (Fisher, 2012, p:13).

This is commonly referred to as self-stigma, internalized homophobia, or internalized heterosexism (Herek, Chopp & Strohl 2007; Herek, Gillis, & Cogan 2009; Meyer & Dean, 1998; Weinberg, 1972). As Chung (2001, p.40) argues, he resigned as a result of the experience of discrimination. However, different from Chung's (2001) argument, he did not make this decision in order to prevent people at the workplace finding out about his sexual identity since he already had been disclosed at the work place. As Kaos GL (2009) argues, when homosexuals are disclosed they are forced to resign or are fired in Turkey.

In the following sections, I discuss "Construction a False Heterosexual Identity" as a form of the identity management strategy of "Hiding Sexuality", "Revealing Sexual Orientation" and in the latter sections I discuss the 'vocational coping strategy forms' which lesbians and gays employ in the work place.

In the current section, I have dealt with how my approach differentiates from the strategy modelisation of Chung (2001), the concept of '*fluidity between coping strategies*' that I developed through my field work and finally I have discussed the

various coping strategy forms that white collar lesbians and gays use. In this way I have finished to discuss how lesbians and gays experience discrimination and how they cope with the risk and encountered discriminatory treatment. In the final chapter I provide a brief summary of the findings that I dealt with in the former chapters, contributions of my reasech to literature and finally my suggestions for further researches that will fill the limitations of this research.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

We are born into a world which has a consciousness that is culturally constructed and in which hegemonic norms are determined by the values of society. These values vary from one culture to another. People who have the aspects which are associated with these norms are assumed to be ‘normal’ in society. This normative understanding differentiates people thereby, causes the emergence of minority groups. As Collins (1994) argues, minority groups always made feel as ‘other’ and so they question their ‘difference’, along with their entire lives, since they are forced to feel ‘different’. Stereotypes of these minorities have been created by people who believe themselves to be dominant in society and assume that they have the right to define minorities. These definitions are expressed in the form of various discourses on minority groups arising from these stigmas. Thus, stigmas cause prejudice, hostility and fear regarding these groups. All of these are the cause of discrimination against them, which is encountered and anticipated in all spheres of life, particularly in work life. One of the groups who experiences discrimination at the work place is LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transsexual) people.

In this thesis, I have addressed the experiences of discrimination a specific group from this minority, namely white collar lesbian and gay employees at the workplace, in order to focus on and discuss their specific experiences. During the interviews, I also asked the respondents questions on whether they take a stand as passive or active with regard to the anticipation and occurrence of discriminatory treatment, the kind of coping strategies they used and ‘how’ they used them.

While discussing this issue, I tried to avoid dealing with the problem from a narrow approach, looking at the issue as if it is caused only by being homosexual. Feminism makes connections between all forms of oppression which result in inequality and discrimination. It also questions how the male dominated system maintains itself in the background of these. Since this is a thesis has been written from a feminist perspective, I have dealt with the structures creating, enhancing and legitimating homophobia and discrimination in the work place, as an area which reflects the general point of view of the society. Furthermore, I argued that the main reason for discriminatory and homophobic treatment of lesbians and gays is their being different from the 'dominant norms'. I also compared and found similarities in the experiences of lesbians and gays who are not in compliance with gender norms with the experiences of other minorities who also are not in compliance with other dominant norms in order to discuss the issue in a wider context related to Turkey. Turkey is a country in which conservative moral and religious values are dominant in all spheres of life and political parties having a conservative point of view have governed for years. As Erol (2009) points out, homosexuals have been pushed to an 'invisible' state with an exclusion process since the final period of Ottoman Empire:

The reality of homosexuality is dismissed from bureaucratic elites; and begins not to be spoken about in the social and public spheres. The homosexual is forced into the status of being guilty without having committed crime, which has continued to this day. Homosexuals, who are sieged by a blockade of invisibility, are fully excluded from social and cultural life. Lives which are imprisoned in the corners of dark parks or a few unknown *hamam* (Turkish baths) are stamped as being immortal, sick and perverted. This is the fate of homosexuals in a Turkey which has turned its face to the West...

During the military coup period, the pressure on sexual minorities increased and their existence was denied in the public sphere (Kaos GL, 2009). After the 90's, homosexuals started to challenge this pressure by organizing in LGBT NGOs (Güner et al, 2011). As a result of these challenges, they became more visible in public. This visibility was important as it finally demonstrated the existence of homosexual

people in society. However, there is still a long way to go to change the heterosexist system in Turkish society that is based on the values, which mainly arises from a specific understanding of 'morality'.

Conservative understanding of morality in Turkish society is a heterosexist construction since it accepts only the 'heterosexual family' established through the institution of marriage as a 'moral' and 'normal' relationship form and views all other forms of involvement as 'immoral' and 'abnormal'. Thus, homosexuality is seen as an immoral and perverse relationship form and as a curable psychological illness by the Turkish society as well as by the state. This is a result of the 'psychological discourse'. Religion is another influential structure in Turkey and it forms the 'sin discourse' that forbids homosexuality. Since the laws of science and religion are required to be accepted without question, these discourses legitimate homophobic attitudes (Altınay, 2007); this is the case in work places as it is in all other spheres in society.

The practice of 'coming out' particularly as political action against the heterosexist culture that denies existence of homosexuals resulted in their visibility in the public sphere (Ertetik, 2010). Furthermore, gays and lesbians, who have some aspects which are different from the norms of masculinity and femininity in society and which are viewed as 'indicators of sexual orientation', experience more suspicion. However, the respondents reported that visibility has also resulted in a homophobic and repressive environment for homosexual people in public sphere, particularly in work life.

White collars are professionals in various occupational areas. Profession is the vocation, practice or occupation which requires a mastery of a complex set of skills and knowledge through practical experience or formal education, such as in medicine, law, accounting, driving, and similar work. (Hodson & Sullivan, 2012). At

the beginning of this study, I had assumed/made the assumption that there was discrimination based on sexual orientation in most of the work places and professional areas against white collar lesbian and gay employees, regardless of their professional status which is valued in society, because homophobia is widespread in Turkey. At the end of my research, I have confirmed this assumption. I had also assumed that in the academic profession, especially in the Social Sciences, and in the fashion industry there is not homophobic discrimination. The image of the fashion industry is one where all its employees are gay and gays are comfortable in this industry. The Social Sciences in academics are similar in that lectures address issues on relevant social problems, the professors are relatively more sensitive on these issues and the work environments in these faculties are less discriminatory.

However, through my observations in academia while working on my Masters Degree and anecdotes of the lecturers that were shared during the lectures on gender issues, I understood that most of the academics and the work environments in the Social Sciences may be gender-blind. Thus, I thought that there may be a homophobic environment that creates homophobic discrimination even in the Social Sciences. Similarly, I thought that the points of view of employees and supervisors in the fashion industry are not independent from the point of view of the society which is homophobic. Thus, I assumed that there may be some homophobic environments also in the fashion industry. In my work, I found data that suggests that even in these areas, there is discriminatory treatment.

My other hypothesis was that lesbians are invisible in Turkey because most of them are forced to get married to a man and their sexuality is denied or not seen as a threat for the male dominant system; therefore, lesbians do not experience discrimination in their work lives as a result of their invisible status in society. However, I found that they also experience discrimination if their sexual orientation is revealed in their work lives. Nevertheless, lesbians experience discrimination less compared to gays in work life. The image of homosexuality in society is a gay man having effeminate

aspects in his appearance, behavior or speech, like gay men represented in the media. The existence of lesbianism is denied in this image, so unless lesbians disclose themselves or are found out explicitly in any other way (i.e. from the internet or the media), they do not experience discrimination in terms of their sexual orientation, even in cases where they are implicitly out through some aspects, such as having appearance that is different from gender norms. They all experience discrimination because of being women in work life and being an open lesbian increases the level of discrimination.

Most of the respondents reported that they feel the pressure of the conservative environment that is further enhanced with Justice and Development Party (JDP) government and the homophobic violence against LGBT people and they said this causes stress in their work lives as well as their daily lives. Furthermore, most of the respondents argued that LGBT NGOs can be recourse for them when they encounter discriminatory treatment.

Through the comments of respondents, I found that regardless of whether these workplaces are conservative or egalitarian and public or private, almost all work places are 'unsafe' for lesbians and gays and they feel the pressure of homophobic discrimination in form of termination of employment, humiliation, ridicule and sexual harassment. As the respondents have indicated, 'safe' work places are the work places where the level of discrimination is low. The safest work places that respondents mentioned are LGBT NGOs and gay pubs. Only one of the lesbian respondents, who is working as a technical team manager in a university, reported that there is a regulation on discrimination based on sexual orientation in her university where homophobia is not felt so much; even she reported that "There is always the apprehension of an approaching danger". She reported that there is always the risk of discrimination even in such a safe university.

Basing my work on Levine and Leonard's (1984) definitions of formal and informal discrimination, I examined the experiences of discrimination of the respondents in these two forms. The main factor that lays the foundation for formal discrimination is the absence of laws and work place regulations that protect LGBT people from discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The other factor is the 'legal gap' in Turkey. Furthermore, the 'public morality' discourse which excludes homosexuals and the 'psychological discourse' which deals with homosexuality as a 'disorder' are reflected in the laws and regulations of work places. This gap in the legislation results in forms of formal discrimination. The forms of formal discrimination that I found are not being hired, not being promoted to higher level positions, being forced to resign and termination of employment.

In Turkey, the military can fire personnel for having a disorder or being involved in an unnatural relationship. Some of the other public work organizations mostly fire their employees because of they are not 'in compliance with the requirements to be met for being a public servant' on the grounds of being 'immoral'. Most of the public and private organizations fire their employee with reasons like 'decline in job performance'.

I examined forms of informal discrimination in order to categorize verbal harassment and nonverbal harassment, based on the conceptualization of Levine and Leonard (1984). The forms of informal discrimination that I found are ostracism, ridicule, hard stares, loss of respect, denial of or ignoring the person, mobbing, sexual harassment, repeatedly asking questions (especially on marriage), humiliation, stigmatization, and verbal harassment in a seemingly accepting and tolerant way, such as statements in the form of "I accept homosexuals" or "You are different from the other homosexuals".

In addition, through the experiences of the informant Karatay, a fashion designer and the other informants' indirect reports, I found that whereas in most of the work environments in the fashion industry, gays are dominant, able to express their identity comfortably and rarely experience discriminatory treatment, there are also other work environments in this industry in which heterosexuals are dominant and here, gays often prefer not to express their identity since there is always a risk of homophobic discriminatory treatment. However, the types of discriminatory treatment in these areas are mainly in the form of the loss of discipline or authority and ridicule, and they do not reach as serious a level as termination of employment. In non-conservative work environments in the Social Sciences, the level of encountered and anticipated discrimination for gays and lesbians is lower compared to other professions in the academy and most of the other occupational areas; however, in conservative work environments, gays and lesbians may experience encountered and anticipated discrimination at such serious levels of discriminatory treatment as termination of employment even in the Social Sciences. In sum, in the work environments in fashion industry where gays are dominant and in the non-conservative work environments for the Social Sciences, I found that the discrimination level is lower compared to all other occupational areas in Turkey.

Most of the respondents reported that because of the repressive and homophobic environment in the country and in work life, they choose to be hidden in most of the work spheres. Gay respondents who described themselves as having some effeminate aspects stated that they feel the pressure of the risk of discrimination and homophobia more.

The forms of hiding that I found were behaving as if interested in the opposite sex, fabricating a lover, ending the conversation, changing the subject, keeping quiet and quitting the place, 'imitating heterosexuality in nonverbal features' in terms of dress, jewelry, gestures and mimics and 'in verbal features' in terms of tone of voice, manner of speaking, the words that are used and rhetoric.

LGBT people generally do not apply to legal remedies in the face of discriminatory treatment since they are afraid of being disclosed and experience even more discriminatory treatment on the basis of their sexual orientation (Kaos GL, 2009).

Most of the respondents have a general awareness on the legal framework in Turkey and the opportunity of applying to the ECtHR. However, only two of the activist respondents reported that they could work in any work place, public or private, that they explicitly expressed their identity and that they claimed their rights when faced with any discrimination. The others reported that they choose to be implicitly out or disclosed in order not to experience discrimination at work.

I found that white collar lesbians and gays disclose their identities ‘implicitly’ or ‘explicitly’ at the work place and they mostly disclose to selected people. Most of the respondents reported that having a political standpoint which has been developed by the possession of other identities, like being Kurdish, Alevi or a feminist, a leftist and similar identities that are repressed, is not sufficient by itself to be fully free of homophobia. They also stated that the criteria for choosing someone to disclose to at the work place is basically being close to this person and his/her trustworthiness. The criterion for these persons is sometimes having political standpoints, like being Kurdish, Alevi, a feminist or a leftist, but this is not always the case and not sufficient by itself.

The reasons for revealing the sexual orientation identity that I found are authenticity, creating social change, getting social support, having allies as a pressure relief valve, establishing close relationships and the discomfort of being assumed to be a heterosexual.

The coping strategies that they use when searching for a job are using solidarity networks between lesbians and gays, risk taking or selecting gay friendly work environments. The coping strategies that are used in the face of discrimination which I found are quitting, getting social support and confrontation with the perpetrator. The other coping strategies are being hard working, being an agreeable person and performing religious practices.

The psychological effects of discrimination that I found are loss of energy, giving up on the challenge of being promoted to a higher position, shame, anger, and the fear of disclosure, losing her/his job, humiliation, stigmatization, loss of authority over the other co-workers that they manage or their students and feeling always as if they are guilty.

There are few studies on workplace discrimination against LGBT people and those studies are focused on the experiences of lesbian, gay and bisexual employees. Öztürk's work (2001) deals with the issue at the national, discursive, individual and sectoral levels and is basically interested in how discrimination is experienced on these levels. It reveals the forms of discrimination as termination of employment, as well as ridicule, humiliation and unpleasant remarks. The work by KaosGL (2009) reveals the forms discrimination as exclusion, being fired, not being hired, mobbing/harassment, humiliation and stigmatization and also deals with stressful issues regarding the anticipation of discrimination. This study also focuses on the effects of the existence of labor-unions and being a union member for the struggle against discrimination based on sexual orientation. The article by Doğan (2012)'s main contribution is dealing with the effects of whether the work organization, employers and the co-workers are conservative or egalitarian regarding discrimination based sexual orientation at the work place. These three studies are policy-oriented works that suggest various solutions. The KaosGL (2009) study only refers to 'being hidden' and 'quitting' as forms of coping strategies. The work by Öz

(2011) deals with and judicial proceedings and rulings on trials related to the termination of employment in Turkey.

My study is one of the pioneer studies which questions and reveals the discrimination experiences of lesbians and gays in comprehensive manner. The main contribution of this study to literature is dealing in detail with the forms of coping strategies that are used by white collar lesbians and gays living in Turkey. In Chapter V, I dealt with 'identity management', 'discrimination based' and 'vocational based' strategies, as discussed by Chung (2001), and other strategies as new contributions to the current literature. One of them is "selecting allies" as a form of a coping strategy where lesbians and gays select one person after observing and evaluating her/his trustworthiness for years in each work place as a 'pressure relief valve', and those allies are usually heterosexual women. The other strategy, which is a contribution to the literature, is 'performing religious practices' as a precaution against possible discriminatory treatment.

The other contribution of this study is a discussion of workplaces in terms of their being 'safe' or 'unsafe'. This deals with which factors determine if the workplace is the 'safe' or 'unsafe' and how these two types of work organization effect white collar lesbians and gays in terms of discrimination, advancements and welfare.

I found that the pressure of discrimination that pushes lesbians and gays into a hidden status creates a problem with their authenticity and self-integration. They would like to express their identity and live their culture which emerges from their identity freely without feeling the risk of discrimination at the work place. This pressure of being hidden enforces a ghettoization at work place. Gay pubs, LGBT NGOs and most of the work places in ready-made clothing and fashion sectors are the ghettoized work spheres that the respondents indicated. There are few studies on 'ghettoization of lesbians and gays in the public sphere in Turkey' and in terms of

discussing ‘ghettoization of lesbians and gays in the work sphere in Turkey’ this study makes another contribution to the literature.

I made some other contributions in terms of the forms of discrimination and the effects of discrimination. I found that in the hiring processes, employers carry out an internet search (i.e. Google) on the candidates. Lesbians and gays who are LGBT activists, or who write or make statements to the media on LGBT issues have experienced discrimination during the recruitment processes; furthermore, there is also an incident where the respondent whose termination of employment was published in media and caused his being known in media. These individuals also feel the stress of the possibility of being found out from the internet prior to and during the recruitment processes. I also argue that the discourses, ‘I accept homosexuals’ and ‘You are different from the other homosexuals’ are forms of verbal harassment towards homosexuals.

Lesbians and gays have to lie in order to hide their sexual orientation at their work places: These lies bring with them the necessity of maintaining them and sometimes telling new lies. These individuals feel pressured regarding these lies which not only consume their energy but also create conflicts regarding the individual’s authenticity. This study makes a contribution dealing with this type of stressor.

This study also brings a new interpretation to Woods’s (1993) avoidance strategy. I found that the informants are ‘closing the conversation’, ‘transforming the conversation’, ‘keeping in silence, and ‘quitting the place’ as a strategy of avoidance to hide their sexual orientation. However, I found that whereas these strategies used during daily conversations often give lesbian and gays an ‘asexual’ status (that Woods (1993) argues), mostly what occurred was that they were given a ‘question’ status in terms of sexuality.

This study also brings a comprehensive approach that deals with the aspects which have connotations of sexual orientation identity in the literature written in detail. The other literature deals with it as being a 'stigmatized identity' (Clair et al, 2005). I developed a concept which I named '*sexual orientation indicators*' to refer to these aspects in a general manner. I examined this concept in terms of verbal language, such as the tone of voice and nonverbal language, such as gestures and style of dress. I also argued that a homosexual friend can be an indicator or an individual can become revealed through the internet. I have referred to all of these as '*sexual orientation indicators*'. This concept is another contribution of this study.

Another concept that I have developed in this study is '*fluidity between coping strategies*'. I have dealt with this concept in terms of all forms of strategies. According to Anderson et al., (2001), Griffin (1992) discusses four lesbian and gay sexual identity management strategies that are on a 'continuum'. I also argue that one strategy can be the step that is prior to another strategy as Griffin has argued, but I have found that there is also a relationship and flow between these strategies; for instance, being implicitly out to a friend can be a preparatory step prior to the step of being explicitly out. In addition, I have also found that lesbians and gays use multiple identity management strategies at work as Griffin has argued; however, they do not always occur sequentially as Griffin indicates, but sometimes coincide with each other.

In my study, I chose to work on the experiences of white collar lesbians and gays since one of my objectives was to carry out an occupational analysis and the other was to compare the experiences of these groups. Thus, I had to reach lesbian and gay respondents from different occupational areas and interview a sufficient number of respondents for a master thesis. For this reason, I did not deal with the experiences of white collar bisexuals in my study. However, the state of bisexuals has some differences compared with lesbians and gays in society. As one of my respondents, İrfan reported, bisexual people have to explain their existence even to the

homosexuals, since even homosexuals do not exactly accept that bisexuality exists and want to know their exact interest in terms of sex. İrfan reported “There is an image of homosexuality even if it is negative or caricaturized, but there is no such certain image for bisexuality.” Lesbianism is mostly denied until it is revealed explicitly because there is no clear stereotype associated with appearance, behavior and speech for lesbians in society.

However, as most of my lesbian respondents reported, there is an image of lesbians and when they became open in any way, they face some stigmatization, such as always being open to relationships which mostly results in sexual harassment in work life. Bisexuality is denied similar to lesbianism, but it is a more ambiguous issue. Thus, it is important to compare the work life experiences of lesbians, gays and bisexuals in order to deal with the discrimination experiences of all white collar homosexual employees in Turkey. The former studies on discrimination based on sexual orientation in the work place in Turkey deals with the experiences of these three groups. However, I believe a comprehensive approach should continue to be adopted and even further enhanced. Finally, I suggest that the differences in work place experiences of these three groups and the reasons for these should be dealt with in detail in further studies. In my study, I could reach only one respondent from fashion industry and the arguments on fashion industry has been mostly through indirect comments of the other respondents. A further study on fashion industry can discuss sexual orientation based discrimination and coping strategies of gays living in Turkey. Besides, new studies can be focused on all other sectors in Turkey separately. Safe and unsafe workplace definitions have been discussed based on the Western Based studies. In this study conservatism degree has been founded as an unsafeness indicator. The definitions of these concepts can be addressed in detail in further studies. Lastly, in sequential studies, experiences of white collar and blue collar LGBT employees can be compared.

This study is not a study focusing on policy-oriented solutions. However, I would like to mention some suggestions which may serve the solution of this problem. First of all, 'sexual orientation' should be determined openly in legislation of Turkey and regulations of work places. The articles in laws and regulations which contain the expression of 'general morality' directly or some expressions that is related with 'being in compliance with morality understanding of the professional association' that is creating discriminatory environment should be discussed in The Grand National Assembly and in the work organisations.

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Appendix A: Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enformatik Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	<input type="checkbox"/>

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Öner
Adı : Aysun
Bölümü : Kadın Çalışmaları

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST
WHITE COLLAR LESBIANS AND GAYS AND THEIR COPING
STRATEGIES: A CASE STUDY FROM ANKARA, TURKEY

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi almabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi almabilir.
3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi almamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: