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**REGIONAL INEQUALITIES  
AMONG WOMEN IN RESPECT TO  
SOCIAL INTEGRATION : A CASE  
STUDY IN MARMARA AND EAST  
ANATOLIA**

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Institute of Social Sciences  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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in

International Relations

by

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Fatih University

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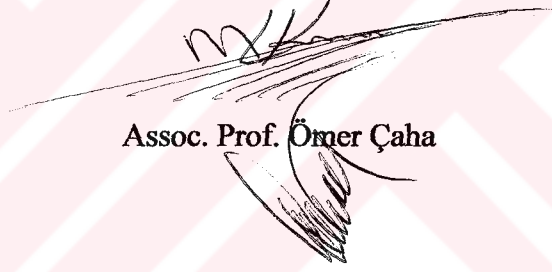
*For my family*



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August 2004

## **AUTHOR DECLARATIONS**

1. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.
2. The program of advanced study of which this thesis is part has consisted of:
  - i) Research Methods course during the undergraduate study
  - ii) Examination of several thesis guides of particular universities both in Turkey and abroad as well as a professional book on this subject.

Elif Aydın

August, 2004

## **ABSTRACT**

**ELİF AYDIN**

**August 2004**

### **REGIONAL INEQUALITIES AMONG WOMEN IN RESPECT TO SOCIAL INTEGRATION : A CASE STUDY IN MARMARA AND EAST ANATOLIA**

The purpose of this study is to scrutinize the women question in Turkey in the context of regional inequalities among women and to point out that it had been insufficient in ensuring social transformation of rights given to women by the Republican regime. With this purpose, in the first chapter of the study reflections of rights given to women in education and law as a result of westernization project in the last period of the Ottoman Empire, namely Tanzimat Period, Second Constitutional Period had been scrutinized. Later it was pointed out that lack of mentality change in traditional structure had made itself evident in regional inequalities among the women due to failure in adaptation of reforms on the women in social scale, as these reforms had been seen as the symbol of the modernization and the symbol of the revolution during the first years of the Republic. In the second chapter of the study a survey was included as a proof of the asserted observation in terms of women question. In this study, questions in eight categories in which their socio-cultural achievements are measured have been asked to 300 women in Marmara region that has the highest socio-economic income level and 200 women in Eastern Turkey that has the lowest socio-economic income level. In the conclusion of this survey study, a comparative analysis of Eastern Anatolia Region and Marmara Region has been made. In the last chapter where a general evaluation of regional inequalities among women that had been proven in the survey was made, current status of women question in Turkey was interpreted. It is pointed out that negative impact of traditional values that are the product of patriarchy forms the main reason to regional inequalities among women. The improvement of the perspective of Turkish women's movement in the concept of ensuring the transformation in patriarchal social structure in Turkey and government's supporting measures in this regard would not serve only for elimination of regional inequality among the women but also it would help further development of the democracy.

This thesis addresses the women question in the context explained above in an attempt to point out the need for elimination of the current regional inequality among the women.

**Key words:**

social transformation

women question

Turkish women's movement

regional inequalities among women

women's rights

## KISA ÖZET

ELİF AYDIN

Ağustos 2004

### SOSYAL İNTEGRASYON BAĞLAMINDA KADINLAR ARASINDAKİ BÖLGESEL EŞİTSİZLİKLER : MARMARA VE DOĞU ANADOLU BÖLGELERİNDE ALAN ÇALIŞMASI

Bu çalışmanın amacı Türkiye’de kadın sorunsalını kadınlar arasındaki bölgesel eşitsizlikler bağlamında inceleyerek Cumhuriyet ’in kadınlara tanıdığı hakların toplumsal dönüşümü sağlamakta yetersiz kaldığını vurgulamaktır. Bu amaçla çalışmanın birinci bölümünde Osmanlı’nın son dönemlerini kapsayan Tanzimat ve II. Meşrutiyet dönemlerinde batılılaşma projesinin bir ürünü olarak eğitim ve hukuk alanında kadınlara verilen haklar incelenmiştir. Daha sonra Cumhuriyet’ in kuruluş yıllarında kadının modernleşmenin sembolü ve devrimlerin temsilcisi olarak nitelendirilmesinin bir ürünü olan kadınlara ilişkin reformların toplumsal alanda içselleştirilememesi nedeniyle geleneksel yapıda bir zihniyet değişikliğinin oluşturulamamış olduğunun kadınlar arasında oluşan bölgesel eşitsizliklerde ortaya çıktığı vurgulanmıştır. Çalışmanın ikinci bölümünde kadın sorunsalı açısından yapılan bu tespitin ispatlanması yönünde bir anket çalışmasına yer verilmiştir. Bu çalışmada en yüksek sosyo-ekonomik gelir seviyesine sahip olan Marmara Bölgesinde 300 ve en düşük sosyo-ekonomik gelir seviyesine sahip olan Doğu Anadolu Bölgesinde 200 kadına sosyokültürel alanda seviyelerinin ölçüldüğü sekiz ayrı kategoride sorular yöneltilmiştir. Bu anket çalışmasının sonucunda Marmara bölgesinin ve Doğu Anadolu bölgesinin karşılaştırmalı analizleri yapılmıştır. Anket kapsamında ispatlanan kadınlar arasındaki bölgesel eşitsizlik durumunun genel bir değerlendirmesinin yapıldığı son bölümde kadın sorunsalının Türkiye’de bugün geldiği nokta yorumlanmıştır. Ataerki düzenin ürünü olan geleneksel değerlerin kadınlar üzerindeki olumsuz etkisinin kadınlar arasındaki bölgesel eşitsizliğinin oluşumunda temel teşkil ettiği dile getirilmiştir. Türkiye’de kadın hareketinin bakış açısının ataerki toplum yapısında değişikliğin sağlanması yönünde gelişmesi ve devletin bu konuda destekleyici faaliyetlerde bulunması sadece kadınlar arasında bölgesel eşitsizliğin giderilmesine değil, aynı zamanda demokrasinin gelişmesine hizmet edecektir.

Bu tez çalışması, kadın sorunsalını bu bağlamda ele alarak kadınlar arasında var olan bölgesel eşitsizliğin giderilmesine duyulan ihtiyacı ifade etmeye çalışmıştır.

#### Anahtar Kelimeler

toplumsal dönüşüm

kadınlar arasındaki bölgesel eşitsizlik

kadın sorunsalı

kadın hakları

Türk kadın hareketi

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Appendix A: The Form of Survey Study

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>YAZKO</b>	<b>Cooperation of Writers and translators</b>
<b>CEDAW</b>	<b>Convention of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women</b>
<b>DEMKAD</b>	<b>Women Association in Democracy Challenge</b>
<b>KADER</b>	<b>The Association to Support and Train Female Candidate for Parliament</b>
<b>TUBAKKOM</b>	<b>Union of Bars Women Rights Commissions Network of Turkey</b>
<b>3B</b>	<b>Information Application Bank</b>

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This thesis has the purpose of studying the women question that had long been in agenda in the context of regional inequalities among women. In the scope of this thesis, it is pointed out that reforms relevant to women that had been made in Republican period had been insufficient in making possible a social mentality change that could have put an end to regional inequalities among women. The aim of this thesis is to analyze causes and consequences of regional inequalities among women in social and societal life. Findings of survey study which exemplified two regions which have differences in terms of socio-economic situation were used to analyze the social status of women. The findings which point out regional inequalities among women were discussed in the final part of the survey study.

This thesis aims to emphasize that the regional inequalities among women necessitate to consider women's rights issue in the concept of social integration. In this process, it would be possible to realize essential projects towards providing of a change in social mentality. When the issue of regional inequality is considered in the concept of social integration and social development, the women question would have a comprehensive perspective. By the realization of social development in the regions where socio-economic income level is low, the social status of women who would have educational and health opportunities can be changed positively.



Although the efforts of the Turkish women's movement which developed after 1980s for achieving women's rights in expression and in action referred to the regional inequalities among women, it could not produce solutions for elimination of this inequality.

The first chapter of this thesis contains reforms relevant to women in respect to historical process of women question including the Tanzimat Period (Reorganization Era), Second Constitutional Period and Republican regime. In this chapter the Tanzimat Period, during which the first developments towards the women had been realized, was discussed. Reforms relevant to women in this era in education, law and mass media had been addressed. Then, the details of the women's rights issue after declaration of the Second Constitutional Period that had been the environment for formation of Ottoman women's movement were explained. The discussions on women question that had been made among the intellectual class, reforms relevant to women in mass media and business life, organization of the women, and formation process of Ottoman women's movement in a framework containing the women activities during years of national struggle were main subjects of the first chapter of the this thesis.

Under the headline of Republic period, the scope of women's rights, inherited by the women's movement that had been formed in the last period of the Ottoman Empire that had been reflected on the social and political rights allocated to women was scrutinized. Moreover, the contribution of changes made in women question to development process of the Turkish women's movement in Republican period that

has the nature of continuance of symbolic use of women in scope of westernization project, has been discussed. Meanwhile, the silence period that Turkish women's movement had entered in during multiparty era during which popularization had dominated in Turkish political life and during single party regime during which a state structure that had not allowed social opposition of any kind was scrutinized. Turkish women's movement in 1980s, during which Turkish women's movement had become active again following a long break, and feminist women had become organized and corporated bringing up in Turkey's agenda an independent women's rights struggle in expression and in action was addressed. It was attempted to analyze the current state that had been achieved today as a result of new perspectives made possible by 1980s ' feminist movement in social and cultural fields. In the last part of this chapter a general evaluation that questions the current state of the women was contained.

In order to prove through concrete evidence, to exemplify the regional inequalities among women that had been emphasized in the first chapter, in the second chapter I have included a survey research that measures socio-cultural levels of today's women. With this purpose, 300 women in Marmara Region representing the highest socio-economic income level and 200 women in East Anatolia Region representing the lowest socio-economic income level had been interviewed face to face and their levels in aspects of education, social, political, family and health had been specified. In line with the answers provided to these questions that had been used as criteria in determination of the position of the women in social and public fields, we observe that regional inequalities become a matter of primary importance.

In this chapter where survey results were reflected in tables and some comments were made on survey results, a general evaluation that refers to regional inequalities among women is also included in the last part. In such evaluation, it is pointed out that the survey results indicated that, despite the reforms relevant to women in social and societal life that took place since the establishment of the Republic, it had been unable to eliminate regional inequalities among women.

In the last chapter of my thesis the current state of women question in Turkey have been questioned in the scope of the survey results. Considering how much progress had been marked by Turkish feminist movement in terms of women's rights issue it was stated that there had been some important changes pertaining to the women. On the contrary, it is essential to emphasize that feminist movement had not been so successful in ensuring large masses' benefiting reforms relevant to women or in creating a women awareness at social level. The most fundamental indicator supporting this opinion is the regional inequalities among women that were attempted to prove in survey results.

In the conclusion, standing point of this thesis, method of research and discussions of regional inequalities among women with respect to social integration were briefly determined. This thesis focuses on the issue that failure in Republican reforms' adaptation by the society in general had led to the regional inequalities among women that further strengthen women's unfair status in social sphere. We observe that this inequality among women is a significant factor in continuity of social pressure surrounding the women in social sphere. Feminist ideal that fails in

eliminating regional differences among the women has to review its dynamics and, question social problems in terms of women's rights, and develop a new perspective.

Redefining women's rights ideal noting regional characteristics and social structure by feminist movement that had contributed remarkably to civil society's having a broader scope in Turkey would have an important role in its civil organization as opposed to state. In this context, feminist movement in Turkey shall lead the steps to be made by the state for elimination of the regional differences among the women as a requisite of democratic system. Such transformation of the social structure shall make a significant contribution to further development of the democracy as well as serving to the purpose of creating an environment in favor of the women.

Efforts of the state and women organizations in interaction for eliminating unjustly treatments that prevails traditional structure are important for ensuring a more fundamental progress. As the result of these efforts, depending on the adaptation of social and political rights allocated to women in Turkey a change in social mentality must be aimed.

Women's participation in decision making mechanisms more often and of a certain quality shall be one of the indicators of social transformation. Elimination of current regional inequalities among women must be prioritized in order to put an end to women's position of being in secondary importance that prevails in every aspect of the society. As the result of works carried out by the state and civil social

institutions for transformation of traditional doctrines and for implementation of reforms relevant to women, elimination of regional inequalities among women and reinforcing the foundation of the democracy in the society would be possible.



## **CHAPTER 1**

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: WOMEN IN THE MODERNIZATION OF TURKEY THROUGHOUT PERIODS OF TANZIMAT, SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY AND REPUBLICAN REGIME**

As a result of arrangements aimed towards women in modernization process commencing with the declaration of the Tanzimat, important improvements had been achieved in women's intellectual life and in their political and social rights. Women's social status had been through an important transformation in the Second Constitutional Period during which disintegrations had taken place in Ottoman's social life after Tanzimat Period. Experience attained in this period had prepared the foundation for women's acquiring significant rights in Republic of Turkey.

In order to assess the current position attained by the women, an important aspect of Turkey's modernization process, it is essential to address the historical background of modernization efforts concerning women. This section of the thesis aims to point out the historical dynamics of Turkish women's movement in order to analyze dynamics of social and political rights assigned to women by the republic, and to re-assess the progress made by the women in this process within the context of problems of women. The concept of feminism accelerated during period of reforms in the Ottoman Empire that begun with the 1839 Tanzimat Period constituted the basics of reforms on women during the first years of the republic. Women's rights issue in republican era has been through a recess period after 1950s. Turkish

women's movement that failed to mark any effective feminist movements until 1980s has formed a wide scale feminist movement that fends effectively women question after 1980s. At the end of this historical process, it would be possible to interpret success of reforms relevant to women in Turkey in the light of modernization ideal in transforming traditional values prevailing in society.

Process for formation of women movement in Turkey lies inside of the modernization process. In 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Ottoman Empire's decline in comparison to technologic and scientific developments and administrative structuring in the West had become an important issue that had been focused and addressed by government elite in late period. Government elite has recognized the need for making important leaps towards westernization in administrative, economic, legal, and educational fields in order to overcome this period of backwardness.<sup>1</sup>

Modernization efforts in 19<sup>th</sup> century have led to certain fundamental disintegrations in traditional structure of Ottoman society. Such fundamental reforms that had taken place in Ottoman society in administrative and economic fields included formation of a constitutional government, rising of an intelligentsia and bureaucratic circle in public that would become active in administration, and education of the women.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın: Türkiye'de Sivil Toplum ve Kadın*, Vadi Yayınları, 1996, p.85

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.86

In the basis of the intelligentsia's emphasis on women's education, there lies the symbolic meaning that is attributed to women in westernization project. Such symbolic perception of women has been common to government elite and intelligentsia until the establishment of the Republic and for long years thereafter.

## **1.1 The Issue of Women during the "Tanzimat"**

Agenda of women question was introduced in Ottoman history by the government coinciding with the Second Constitutional Period. In Tanzimat Fermanı of 1839, a comprehensive westernization movement in almost every field had been intended.<sup>3</sup>

### **1.1.1 Relevant Developments in Education**

In order for reforms that had been planned with westernization motive penetrate in Ottoman social structure, it was pointed that ignorance of women had been a giant obstacle for growing a generation that might have been intellectual, well educated and beneficial to the nation. It was stressed that the most important role in growing intellectual and well educated individuals, who would have been beneficial to the nation, had been that of mothers, who provide the initial teachings and discipline to them.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını*, M.E.B. Yayınları, 1997, p.14

<sup>4</sup> Zehra Toska, "Cumhuriyet'in Kadın İdeali: Eşiği Aşanlar ve Aşamayanlar", Ayşe Berktaş Hacimirzaoglu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.71



The opinion advocated by the majority of the intellectuals of the Tanzimat Period was that men and women had to be equal in terms of education. Islahat Fermanı (The Reform Decree) that had been declared in 1856 was concluded that the schools were open to everyone, that communities were to be free to open schools that are more suitable to their specific cultural and writing, that, notwithstanding above, curriculum of all schools as well as those of teachers were subject to supervision and inspection of *Meclis-i Maarif* (Council of Resents).<sup>5</sup> In this decree, it was also declared that no citizen would be in secondary position based on their gender.<sup>6</sup>

With *Maarif-i Umumiye Nizamnamesi* (Regulations of Public Education) that had gone in effect in 1869, receipt of elementary school education by girls between ages 6 and 11 had been compulsory.<sup>7</sup> Following the acceptance of these regulations the very first all girls vocational school were opened in Istanbul to provide vocational education.<sup>8</sup> The *Darülmuallimat* (The woman's teacher-training college) had been opened in 1870 and women graduated from these schools had been appointed to various parts of the country in order to educate other women.<sup>9</sup> With the opening of these schools women had another working environment. Graduates of *Darülmuallimat* came out to be the first woman public officers of the government. Thanks to this school, number of teachers in country had increased and therefore there had been an increase in number of girl students in rueshdiyes as well.

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<sup>5</sup> Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, Metis Yayınları, 1993, p. 219

<sup>6</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.88

<sup>7</sup> Ömer Çaha, "The Role of Women in the Formation of Civil Society in Turkey", paper presented in *American Political Science Association Annual Conference 2001*, San Fransisco/USA, August 30/September2, 2001, p.1

<sup>8</sup> Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, p. 220

<sup>9</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.89

In Kanun-i Esasi (The First Constitution) that had been resolved in 1876, the compulsion of elementary education for boys and girls had been arranged as a constitutional clause.<sup>10</sup>

In the Tanzimat Period, receipt of vocational education by girls in education and medicine had been aimed. For this purpose, the introduction to vocational education for girls had been made in schools that gave vocational education to girls such as Midwife School, Girls' Industry School, and Girls' Teachers School in this period.<sup>11</sup>

As a result of efforts of Ottoman government on women's education, educational institutions throughout the country become prevalent and it was aimed to give greater number of women labor possibilities this way. The seeds sown in Tanzimat period for women's inclusion in education had sprouted in the Second Constitutional Period.

### **1.1.2 Relevant Developments in the field of Mass Media/Communication**

Significant developments marked in women's education had led to women's visibility in mass media. The first press activity relevant to women in Ottoman society has begun with publication of "*Muhadderat*", a separate newspaper

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<sup>10</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını*, , p.19

<sup>11</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, M.E.B. Yayınları, 1996, p.77

specifically for women, in year 1888 by “*Terakki*”, the first and the only newspaper that had been published in Ottoman Empire in 1868.<sup>12</sup>

Between 1868 and 1900 there have been a total of 13 different magazines published for women. Moreover, approximately 40 women magazine that had been published in ottoman language had been detected between 1869 and 1927.<sup>13</sup> In these publications, the importance of women’s education in development of the nation, prohibition of polygamy that had been widespread especially in administrative section of the society, and the need for equal status for men and women in public sphere had been discussed and these issues were highlighted as women’s rights.<sup>14</sup> An important issue that requires special attention here is that, by means of women magazines, women readers and women authors in magazines were given a mean of criticism for criticizing traditional patterns that had been attributed to them.

Women writers began their publication life by publishing “*Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*” (The Ladies’ Own Gazette) which appeared in 1895. The most important characteristic of this newspaper was being the women’s magazine with longest lifespan, with a total of 604 issues published in 13 years between 1895 and 1908.<sup>15</sup> In “*Hanımlara Mahsus Gazete*” issues like women’s problems, family, society and business lives of women have been addressed. One of the ideas influential in publication of this magazine was the need for educating the women due

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<sup>12</sup> Ömer Çaha, “*The Role of Women in the Formation of Civil Society in Turkey*”, p.1

<sup>13</sup> Şirin Tekeli, “Birinci ve İkinci Dalga Feminist Hareketlerin Karşılaştırmalı İncelemesi Üzerine Bir Deneme“, Ayşe Bertay Hacimirzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.340

<sup>14</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.89

<sup>15</sup> Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, p.27

to their role as mothers. In pieces of women writers of this period a belief that women should be the symbols of chastity, virtue and morality prevails.

Therefore, mostly issues that wouldn't discomfort the administration such as rights of education were emphasized in articles and pieces. It is understood that, since they published most of their publications in Istanbul, activities of press and publication media had been limited to certain centers and therefore had not reached broad masses. Nevertheless, these efforts of intellectual section that managed to attract public attention on women question and to share this question with relatively broader masses in comparison to previous periods still had not reached the desired level. However, publication activities of intellectuals, who could address a small group of people, have formed the basis for Ottoman women's defending their rights and for reform movements that are to be sprouted in years to come.

### **1.1.3 Legal and Public Aspects concerning Women**

Legal arrangements that grant women certain legal rights in Tanzimat Period have transformed the inequity between man and woman that prevails in law in general to level of equity in certain issues only.

*Arazi Kanunnamesi* (Land Law) dated 1858 and *Sicil-i Nüfus Nizamnamesi* (Regulations on Public Registration) dated 1881 that are recognized to be revolutionary for Ottoman women in legal arena have been realized in Tanzimat

Period.<sup>16</sup> In *Arazi Kamunnamesi* dated 1858 that is accepted as one of the first codes in Ottoman law that addresses the gender equality between man and woman, it is set forth that the inheritance would be distributed among the male and female offspring evenly.<sup>17</sup>

In *Sicil-i Nüfus Nizamnamesi* dated 1881 the government had introduced an arrangement on marriage concept for the first time. Marriage contract that is the cornerstone of family life had been performed by imams before regulations. With the innovation introduced with regulations it is stipulated that a permit to be obtained from the authorities for marriage contract. Marriage process that had been attributed a legal aspect and a secularist look following *Sicil-i Nüfus Nizamnamesi* demonstrates that fundamental traditional applications in Ottoman family structure were abandoned.<sup>18</sup>

Works towards abolishing of concubine institution in Ottoman in mid of 19<sup>th</sup> century has brought about a concrete step in resolving that the Ottoman citizens had individual liberty with declaration of Kanun-i Esasi in 1876. Presence of concubines in the palace until the abolition of monarchy hints that such provisions in the constitution are limited to that extent and that it had no effect in actual practice.

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<sup>16</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.88

<sup>17</sup> Mehmet Ö. Alkan, "Tanzimat'tan Sonra Kadının Hukuksal Statüsü ve Devletin Evlilik Sürecine Müdahalesi Üzerine". *Toplum ve Bilim*, 1990,p. 86

<sup>18</sup> As a result of government's intervention on marriage process, town administrations had become authorities that attest to marriages and institutions that keep the records on marriages in an orderly fashion. Mehmet Ö. Alkan, "Tanzimat'tan Sonra Kadının Hukuksal Statüsü ve Devletin Evlilik Sürecine Müdahalesi Üzerine", p. 89

Another important point that has to be stressed here is that concubine institution had been limited to central cities and that it did not spread to rural areas.

In Tanzimat Period the government had become commanding Ottoman's family life and social life by means of legal arrangements and applications. Although it is not completely evident in the Ottoman Empire in general with legal provisions on family life, traditional family structure and family's legal standing; it is possible to assert that there have been major disintegrations that had been encountered during Tanzimat Period.<sup>19</sup> Innovations introduced in marriage, divorce and inheritance issues in this period, may be discussed as reflections of changes, through which Ottoman family had been, in legal arena.

Aside from the influences of the west that became evident in fashion sense of women life in palaces and mansions in city centers in Ottoman land, old rules with provisions of Islam pertaining to dressing of Ottoman women remained in effect. Until Tanzimat Period there had been published several firmans providing for warnings and prohibitions on the way of dressing and attitude of Ottoman women. Even after the declaration of Tanzimat, entrance of women in shops for shopping, their sitting in shops, their visiting promenades, and their strolling on streets at night were prohibited with legal arrangements.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Aile*, Pan Yayınları, 2000, p.149

<sup>20</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.90

During the Tanzimat Period the women had been included in public labor area for the first time. A woman's getting appointed as a teacher in 1873 for the first time, and women's getting appointed administrative posts in schools in 1883 were the first indicators of women's inclusion in public sector.<sup>21</sup> Meeting of labor demand with working women in industry led to women's increasing visibility in public sphere. Appearance of the women in public sector hints that the social position of women has gotten free of patterns of traditions.

## **1.2 Reforms concerning Women during the Second Constitutional Period**

The Reinitiation of Constitutional order achieved in 1908 with the leadership of Young Turks, who had been influenced by French Revolution, had been interpreted as declaration of liberty of the women, just as it had been interpreted as declaration of liberty of many other groups. Young Turks, forming the majority of bureaucrats and intelligentsia, have placed the westernization ideal in the heart of their policies. They have scrutinized in depth women question that they considered to be an important tool in the process of realizing this ideal.

Young Turks were not contented with women's social position at the point of serving to modernization policies. As Şerif Mardin also states, "Ignorant mothers were not capable of giving the children they raised the moral quality that is expected by society motivators".(Mardin, 1997) Defeats of Turks in the wars they entered had

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<sup>21</sup> Şirin Tekeli, *Kadınlar ve Siyasal Toplumsal Hayat*, Birikim Yayınları, 1982, p.196

become effectual in women's education forming an important agenda in discussions of source of social improvement by intellectuals and government officers of this era.

Upon the declaration of Constitutional order, there has been a great increase in capability of women in self expression and in their capability in organization. In major cities such as Istanbul and Thessalonica, there has been a business field for women aiming for realization of the transformation of Ottoman women's traditional position. As a result of the studies made in this field, traditional position of women had been discussed by means of establishment of many women associations, publications towards women, and activities such as panels, seminars, symposiums and conferences.

İttihat ve Terakki Party which had been in power in this era encouraged establishment of women associations. The conviction that women consciousness would enable them to make important initiatives at their participation to economic life had an important role in the women policy of the governing party. Serpil Çakır have addressed women associations that had been established between 1909 – 1923 and number of which have reached to 40 in 8 different categories, namely as associations with the purposes of education, culture, solution of national problems, serving national defense, political oriented, associations of political parties and feminist associations.(Çakır,1993)

İttihat ve Terakki Party that was in power in Second Constitutional Period have addressed the women question as a national cultural and economic issue. In the



light of this reasoning, reforms in social life, law, education and mass media activities realized for women rendered the women visible in this period.

### 1.2.1 Relevant Developments in Education

In 1911 all girls' idadi (senior high school) had been opened.<sup>22</sup> Idadis were transformed in to senior high schools in 1913. In this period girl' idadis could not be moved to out of Istanbul. In 1909, number of "*Dar-ül Muallimat*" schools that served for women's reunion with educational capacity had reached 29 including the ones in rural area.<sup>23</sup> In Istanbul "*Dar-ül Fünun*" (Women's University) that had been opened in 1914 in Istanbul, issues such as education on women's rights, household information, nature, health, history, pedagogy were emphasized in courses for women.<sup>24</sup> In this period women were also given the right to enter "*Dar-ül Elhan*" (Academy of Fine Arts).

Women's reunion with capacity of higher education is the indicator of maintenance of male-female equity. Women's reunion with higher education capacity would serve to increase in women's cultural level and opening of new business field for women. In this period girl students were sent to Europe for the first time.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Serpil Çakır, *Osmanlı Kadın Hareketi*, p.224

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*,p.90

<sup>24</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını*,p.80

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*,p.89

We observe that positive developments in education field in the Tanzimat Period had been carried to a further point in the Second Constitutional Period. As a result of training activities that are mainly focused on vocational and cultural aspects, women had attained a certain level of intellect. Further to taking active role in national causes, educated and intellectual women had made the efforts in participating in social life, expressing their opinion by means of newspapers and magazines and organizing through associations. Although there have been determined great targets pertaining to women's education in the Second Constitutional Period, the ends hadn't been attained. It is essential to point out that the most important achievement in this period had been reuniting the girls with capacity of higher education. Higher education capacity given to girls would make great contribution in ensuring acceleration in women's participation to social and cultural activities.

### **1.2.2 Relevant Developments in the field of Mass Media and Communication**

A great increase in number of women magazines had been encountered in independence environment of Second Constitutional Period. 22 new women magazine had begun their publication life between 1909 and 1923.<sup>26</sup> Ottoman women had succeeded in having the means of pointing out their social and political criticism through these magazines. Among all women magazines published in this period, "*Kadınlar Dünyası*" (Women's World) that defended the rights of the women had a

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<sup>26</sup> Nermin Abadan-Unat, "Söylemden Protestoya: Türkiye'de Kadın Hareketlerinin Dönüşümü", Ayşe Berktaş Hacımirzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.324

distinct importance in being the publication of “*Osmanlı Müdafaa-I Hukuk-u Nisvan Cemiyeti*” (Ottoman Association for Defense of Women Rights). “*Kadınlar Dünyası*” had served in active engagement of women who had recognized their problems in solution of such problems. In this period Ottoman feminists had pointed out the need for provision of women’s having proper education, their appearing in public sector and in business life, and women’s having rights equal to those of men in issues pertaining family life such as marriage and divorce.

### **1.2.3. Legal and Public Aspects concerning Women**

Although westernization had been the center of influence in every field after Tanzimat, for family aspects Islam law were prevailing. In 1910, demanding money from the groom with the name of “başlık” or any other term, other than “mehir” had been prohibited.<sup>27</sup> In Second Constitutional Period criminal system had been subjected to criticism and the principal of equity in penal code had been recognized.<sup>28</sup> Following the arrangements made in 1912 on inheritance issue, male and female offspring were given the equal rights to inheritance. This law had an improving effect on the status of widowed women.

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<sup>27</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Döneminde Türk Kadını*, p.109

<sup>28</sup> Although it was provided for that no difference would have been sought for in punishment of men and women in accordance with the Article 54 of penal code that had been in effect before Second Constitutional Period, it is observed that this indeed had not been the case in practice. If a man detects his wife in fornication and kills the wife and the man the wife had affair with the husband had been dismissed. If the woman survives she’d be pressed with the charge of imprisonment for a term of 3 months to 2 years and the man participating in crime were dismissed with a simple fine. With the amendment made to Criminal Code in 1911, it is provided for that an imprisonment varying between 2 months to 2 years to be charged to men and women who committed adultery.

A regulation with the nature of a revolution that had been made by the state in this period is Family Law Decree dated October 31, 1917. With this decree, prepared by taking social values of Ottoman society into consideration, it was provided for that, although adherence to Islam law was anticipated for issues pertaining Moslems; marriages and divorces would not be committed without the permission of the state and family life had been put in order by the hand of the government.<sup>29</sup> With Family Decree women were given some very important rights. Age of marriage had been set as 17 for women and 18 for the men. Women were given the right to divorce in cases of certain physiologic disorders, or insanity in men, or in cases of disability in maintaining the livelihood of the family or domestic violence. Discontinuance of livelihood due to disappearance of the husband had become one of the divorce grounds. Men could marry a second wife upon having consent of the first wife. In this decree boundaries had been defined to polygamy. Women as well as men were given the right to divorce.<sup>30</sup> This new legal arrangement that the state was made on family life was limited to marriage and divorce issues, did not include issues such as alimony or childcare.<sup>31</sup>

It is thought that Family Law Decree had had the appearance as if it had been left in a dilemma between Islam law and western law. Since no unity in opinions of all classes had been assured and minorities have objected, Family Law Decree was abolished on June 19, 1919.<sup>32</sup> During the short period in which it remained in effect,

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<sup>29</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını*, p.90

<sup>30</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.102

<sup>31</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını*,p.90

<sup>32</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını*, p.111

this decree made use of by educated women had no grounds for implementation in rural areas.

In Second Constitutional Period it is seen that the women had involved in more in public sphere and had been seen more often in social scene. The more women begin getting out of the area that had been defined as intimate to public area, government issued firmans providing for the women's life in social scene and at times had taken police measures. Intervention of the Ministry of Internal Affairs on women who strolled on streets with immodest clothing in 1909 are one of these police measures that had press exposure.<sup>33</sup> In public areas such as parks and theaters women were given a separate space than those of the men.

Social structure dictated the government in showing enthusiasm in handling the protection of the intimate space of the women. Social morality had been defined around religious beliefs. In such definition of morality the need for preservation of the women intimacy had been pointed out.<sup>34</sup>

#### **1.2.4. Women in the areas of Labor/Social Work**

Before Second Constitutional Period Turkish women in rural areas could mainly involved in economic activities on fields of handcrafts and agriculture. In this

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.,p.121

<sup>34</sup> Nilüfer Göle, *Modern Mahrem*,p. 42

period policies aiming for the participation of the women in economic life had addressed at urban women who had no field of activity except her home.

From 1908 and on greater number of women had the chance to work in public sector. Women, having been participated in economic life in a limited space previously, had contributed to business life in a broader space including hospitals, trading establishments, government offices, and even factories, with some support from the government. In 1913, the women were employed in government offices with the title of public servant.

Following the Second Constitutional Period the number of women working in industrial companies had grown due to social developments, economic distress and the war. Women had worked in industrial companies operating in food processing, textile sector, lumber production, cigarette industry, soap industry, chemical products industry and printing business. In 1908, 30% of labor force of the Ottoman Empire in major city centers were made up of women.<sup>35</sup> In addition to women who work in various industries great number of women were employed in agriculture companies as well.

Government had made an arrangement for women workers until 1915 and brought about legal changes in relation with labor law. With such legal arrangement, the duration of work was limited to 15 hours and use of 1 month vacation in a year

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<sup>35</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.103

had been provided for.<sup>36</sup> Women who had participated in economic life with titles of public servant or worker had also begun trade life as merchants or artisans. A Women Merchant Market that had been constituted by women had been opened in Istanbul.<sup>37</sup> Emphasis put on private initiative and enterprise by İttihat ve Terakki Party had helped women in demonstrating their skills in this field. In this period women had been involved in private enterprises such as tailors, bakery shop ownership, photography, and mining.<sup>38</sup> Such activities hadn't been limited to city centers only, but they had also been seen in small residential areas as well.

Women who work at government service as public servants had some idea on women's rights issue. However, this hadn't been the case for women in rural areas. These women had opted to work in industrial institutions as a result of financial difficulties they encountered. Women's participation in business life due to financial difficulties in general had led to their attaining experience to a certain extent. Such knowledge base and experience of the women would constitute an example for arrangements to be made later during Republican era on women's business life.

### **1.2.5 On the eve of Republic: Women's Place in Turkish Modernization**

Women who had been raised with a nationalist and intellectual outlook in girl' schools opened in the Second Constitutional Period had stated that they would

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<sup>36</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını*, p.111

<sup>37</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *Cumhuriyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını*, p.145

<sup>38</sup> Şefika Kurnaz, *II. Meşrutiyet Öncesinde Türk Kadını*, p.132

sacrifice their lives for the cause of homeland service during the years of national struggle.

In this period, women associations had been established with the purpose of serving salvation of the homeland. These women associations had involved in activities such as aid collection and inviting the public to assist in national defense. Women who had helped in creation of public awareness by emphasizing on the national feelings of the women had collected aids for the army and *şehid* (a citizen who died while serving the Turkish Nation) families.

Thanks to protests carried out many parts of the country Turkish women have carried their social position to international public awareness. From 1918 and on many *Müdafaai Hukuk* (Defending the Rights) associations had been established in Anatolia.

Long lasting war environment resulted by Balkan Wars, World War I, and the War of Independence had made social transformation inevitable. The effects of such transformation had been influential on family lives and social lives of the women significantly. In this period we observe that the changes were made for improving women issues in family life. Women were granted important rights with regards to divorce.

Women who participated in social and political scene during the war environment had built consciousness for national cause and had addressed social



problems as well as women's rights issue. Women who had completed building their intellectual basis during the years of the War of Independence had nevertheless been able to comprehend their presence. This is especially true for urban women who can express their demands.

As a result of preference of liberty and equity principles that are dominant in cultural structure of the west over intimacy theme required by the Islamic doctrine, it is observed that the conventional structure of the society had been changed. Urban women had overcome haremlik (part of the premises reserved for use of women) and selamlık (part of the premises reserved for the use of men) practice in entertainment spaces, education and in business life and participated in social life along with men. Government of the time that had been influenced by the west often had hard times due to reactions of certain groups that wish to preserve the women's intimacy in contrary to women's social visibility out of intimate space. In such cases the state had restricted the space of women by means of prohibitive arrangements, attempting to suppress the social reactions.

When the period commencing with the declaration of Tanzimat and spanning over Second Constitutional Period is evaluated, it is seen that Turkish women's making leap in education and press world enabled their acquiring womanhood consciousness. This woman consciousness that formed the basis of Ottoman women's movement with women's associations, after being reinforced by the presence of women's associations, had served to women's visibility in public sphere by their participation in business life and their succeeding in having a certain

emphasis in political activities as a result of women's involvement at battlefield and back of the front. Women question that had been discussed very often in Ottoman women's movement had been carried to the next level in Republican era. At this point it is essential to stress that women's struggle for women's rights that had been advocated more actively during Second Constitutional Period commencing with Tanzimat Period had made a significant contribution to ensuring gender equity before the state and the laws. In the following of this thesis the focus will be on Republican era during which some very important reforms were put in practice.

### **1.3 Reforms Concerning the Status of Women during the Republic**

I will discuss the arrangements on women in socialization process of the society that begun with the establishment of the Republic in the scope of single-party parliamentary system between 1923 and 1949 and multiparty parliamentary system after 1950. I will study the way women had been perceived and the level of efficiency that women's rights issue have achieved within the society in these political regimes. Later I will address the way Turkish feminist movement that had made a considerable progress in 1980s and handled women question and activities of Turkish feminism in 1990s and today.

### **1.3.1 Relevant Developments during the Early Republican Period (under Single-Party Rule)**

Following the establishment of Republic of Turkey in 1923 it had been evident that the social and cultural structure inherited from the Ottoman had to be renovated. This social transformation had given important responsibilities to women as well as soldiers, bureaucrats and intellectual class.<sup>39</sup> The new state had strived for building of a national identity in order to form the foundation for a new order. The government had aimed for make arrangements required for taking the state up to a modern level in terms of political structure of the state. For the transformation of the social and administrative structure that would serve to this purpose modernization activities were sped up.

Beginning with the establishment of the Republic, we observe particular policies which envisage supremacy of the state over everything and that do not tolerate social differences. The new state had desired to put an end to institutions in which Islamic norms dominated in order to ensure a social change in the traditional structure of the entire society. State had forbidden Islamic communities, closed tekkes and zaviyehs (dervish lodges) and made changes on dressing style. Abolition of the Islamic institutions by the government in order to realize secularism indicates that the religion had lost its effects on corporate visibility in social structure and had become subject to state control. In an environment where religious doctrines that

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<sup>39</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.107

used to have a great impact on the society had lost their visibility, new standards of judgment became necessary.

At the stage of adaptation of the public to new state and to new social values the women were attempted to be used as a tool and this had a strategic impact on realization of the reforms towards women. Use of women in a way that would help Islam tradition lose its effect on Turkish society in order to attain the level of modern civilizations forms the foundation of the reforms relevant to women. Atatürk had stated that women's reunion with a status that is equal to that of the men resembled the loyalty of Turkey to westernization, secularism and democracy.<sup>40</sup> Kemalists, who had seen the women as a tool for elimination of Islam doctrine on one hand and for realization of the modernization on the other hand, had made the efforts in order to establish the environment that would ensure women's participation in public life.<sup>41</sup> Issues such as family, sex, and roles based on gender in the context of modernization had been discussed in Turkey and new identities for man and woman had appeared.<sup>42</sup>

Kemalist woman identity that was overlapped in common lines by Turkism and Westernism which were effective in the Second Constitutional Period was defined as educated and professional woman. Ataturk, founder of Republic, by assuming the definition, emphasized on the important role of women in development of society. Kemalist woman identity would come in life by serving to progress of

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<sup>40</sup> Valentine M. Moghadom, *Modernizing Women, Gender and Social Change in The Middle East*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993, p. 82

<sup>41</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p. 109

<sup>42</sup> Deniz Kandiyoti, *Cariyeler, Bacılar, Yurttaşlar*, Metis Yayınları, 1997, p. 16

nation half of which was made up of women. The reforms realized towards women by new regime have to be assessed around this identity attributed to women.

This new Turkish woman concept shaped around the Kemalist thought, helps his husband in the house and bears economic load of house in daily life.<sup>43</sup> Kemalist woman identity is consented as a cultural means for reshaping men-women relations in the process of participation of citizens into new arrangements executed in institutional area in republican period to build new national identity.<sup>44</sup>

In this period, a representation of national culture that doesn't lose its essence is granted to women who are encountered to an equal status in public area, as reflection of modernization to national values.<sup>45</sup> Socialization of woman in public area is born as a result of individualization of woman. Kemalist men and fathers in this period supported their girls in participation into education, profession and labor life.

New state emphasized the necessity of mental shift in public about the women's rights. The affects of integration of reforms that are effective in this period to public life are mostly seen in women as the modifications in their clothes and finery and their active role in educational area. Besides the alteration of appearance of women, women are required not to follow Western women and lose their virtue.

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<sup>43</sup> Leyla Kırkpınar, "Türkiye'de Toplumsal Değişme Sürecinde Kadın", Ayşe Bertay Hacımırzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.16

<sup>44</sup> Ayşe Durakbaşa, "Cumhuriyet Döneminde Modern Kadın ve Erkek Kimliklerinin Oluşumu: Kemalist Kadın Kimliği ve Münevver Erkekler", Ayşe Bertay Hacımırzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.46

<sup>45</sup> Deniz Kandiyoti, *Cariyeler, Bacılar, Yurttaşlar*, p. 14

This situation caused an asexual identity of Turkish women in public. Atatürk wanted women to give importance to knowledge rather than appearance.<sup>46</sup>

The regulations that were introduced to give women's freedom began to spread to public area taking support of media. After proclaiming of republic, by recognition of new social rights and voting and being elected rights through the acceptance of Turkish Civil Law, Turkish women reached political rights.

### **1.3.1.1 Legal Developments: the Relevance of New Turkish Civil Law**

Some regulations are made for modification of conservative attitude towards rights and freedoms of women in Islamic section in the period until the acceptance of Turkish Civil Law in 17<sup>th</sup> February 1926. State had to soften this conservative environment that constituted a constraint on women before the acceptance of Turkish Civil Law. Some dissolves in the conservative attitude of Islamic section that dominates public and *Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi* (Turkish Grand National Assembly) as a result of closing of dervish lodges and small dervish lodges in 30<sup>th</sup> November of 1925 and closing of medressehs and providing that all schools in country into the administration of government with *Tevhid-i Tedrisat* (Unification of Teaching) in the same year with the annulment of caliphate in 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 1924.<sup>47</sup> Discussion on Turkish Civil Law was commenced by the establishment of a

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<sup>46</sup> Zehra Toska, "Cumhuriyet'in Kadın İdeali: Eşiği Aşanlar ve Aşamayanlar", Ayşe Berktaş Hacımiraçoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.79

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

commission in 1923. The doctrines of Turkists dominating commission affected the commission discussion and it is emphasized that Turkish Civil Law as a significant step towards modernization project had contents that complies with traditions and customs of Turkey. The proposal that commission had arranged was convenient to Islamic rules. Besides allowing polygamy in new proposal, it was declared that this implementation didn't appear as an obligation as to Islam and polygamy had an affect of preventing prostitution. Mass media severely criticized this proposal in which polygamy wasn't prohibited and age of marriage was determined as nine. Islamic circles criticized this proposal, as Islamic Law would wound, Turkists criticized this proposal by discarding positivism and Islamic doctrines would be preceding, proponents of westernization criticized this proposal as it didn't comply with westernization project. Women remained silent to this proposal at first, but by the critics of public they began to raise their voice. A women group assembled in 1924 through some women associations expressed their critics based on personal experiences not on law about this proposal.

Government considered that this commission was insufficient to constitute a code of laws that would serve to a radical alteration in public and decided to have a western Civil Law and translated. The new commission assembled in order to realize this object offered the Swiss Civil Law, described as the most suitable code to secularism, to Turkish Grand National Assembly by making no difference in essence except for decreasing the age of marriage. With the Turkish Civil Law's being effective by the approval of Turkish Grand National Assembly in 17<sup>th</sup> February, 1926, participation of women in public area was provided as a result of rights granted

to women and a modern environment was tried to be formed. Ataturk aimed to set a new sort in family life that constitutes the foundation of society by Turkish Civil Law and obtain egalitarian principles dominating in private field.

By Turkish Civil Law, prohibition of polygamy, women's right for divorce, women's having an equal position in inheritance, age of marriage for girls as 14 and for boys as 18, women's having equal treatment rights in court and marriage's arranging at the supervision of an official and having a legal dimension were all sentenced.<sup>48</sup>

By Turkish Civil Law women acquired an equal status on court in the subjects such as rights of testimony, inheritance and proprietorship. Women acquired the right to select their spouses, suit divorce suits and maintain rights of motherhood after divorce by this law. In this law we see that government aimed to control institution of family by decrees that arrange processes of getting engaged, marriage and divorce. Although Turkish Civil Law prohibited polygamy, it continued in rural regions.

Turkish Civil Law was not able to realize men-women equality because of the decrees that grant men a primary position in terms of sexual roles. Although Turkish Civil Law arranged the spouse equality in some subjects, it contains some decrees that support men's superiority in marriage. According to the law, man is the head of marriage constitution. (151/I) He is responsible for supplying the livelihood of wife

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<sup>48</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.111



and children. (152/III) Mother and father share parental rights, but in a situation of dispute parental rights belong to father. (263) Father who is guardian of a child has right to benefit from his child's income and after covering his needs to hold the remained for himself. (280,281) Woman has some rights too but these rights are limited by legal representation relevant to providing of constant needs of house. (155)<sup>49</sup> Woman' being engaged with a work or a craft is subject to the permission of husband. (159/I) Woman is obliged to take the husband's surname after marriage. (153/I)<sup>50</sup> Man has right and obliged to choose the house in which the family will be settled. (151/I) Man represents the family union with the role of head of house. (154) Woman may only get involved in labor life to contribute to family life. (190) Woman is responsible for care of family and children.(153/II)<sup>51</sup> In Turkish Civil Law, while rights and duties of woman is listed, the clauses, which are relevant to woman's managing house, demanding from her husband to look after her and look after house and children, demonstrate that woman is accepted mainly as a house wife and mother. It extracts a contradictory situation for women that on the one hand participation of women in public area is supported; on the other hand mother and housewife roles of women are mentioned in Turkish Civil Law. Government perceives the violence or bad treatment on woman by her husband as a private problem and therefore takes no protective arrangements for woman about this topic in Turkish Civil Law .<sup>52</sup> Turkish Civil Law arranged in sense of forming a western family model acquired civil law a secular appearance. This law, in sense of it is

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<sup>49</sup> Zehra Arat, "Kemalizm ve Türk Kadını", Ayşe Berktaç Hacımirzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları,1998, p.56

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 57

<sup>51</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*,p. 112

<sup>52</sup> Zehra Arat, " *Kemalizm ve Türk Kadını*", p.58

applied to all citizens without discrimination of religion, extracted civil law from religious basis and set on positivist basis.

### 1.3.1.2 Women in Political Life: Relevant Developments

Demand for right to vote included in human right declaration in the Second Constitutional Period term was expressed more intensely in first years of republic regime. Turkish women's participating in meetings in first years of national fight and their being mobilized for the war of independence behind fronts are important factors in formation of their interest in political area. This political consciousness formed among feminist women at recent terms of Ottoman Empire was effective in coming together after the end of the War of Independence and their founding the first political association called "*Kadınlar Halk Fırkası*" (Women's People Party) in 16<sup>th</sup> June 1923. <sup>53</sup> Legal permission was not granted to the party founded for acquiring women's rights in social, economical and political areas since its regulations are found extreme. By being not able to take no legal permission, founders of the party arranged more moderate regulations and decided to shift the party to an association. Members of party coming together for this reason founded "*Türk Kadınlar Birliği*" (Turkish Women's Union), at presidency of Nezihe Muhiddin, in 7<sup>th</sup> February 1924 instead of a party. <sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.116

<sup>54</sup> Ayşegül Yaraman, *Resmi Tarihten Kadın Tarihine*, p.152

*Türk Kadınlar Birliđi* expressed women's reaching a consciousness for benefiting from social and political rights that were granted to them could only be possible by raising their levels in social life and this association would strive for realizing this. Right after the foundation of *Türk Kadınlar Birliđi*, association focused on women's demand for right to vote in panels, meetings and congresses that it organized in many places. Except for activities of aid for poor women and children, and the conference arranged in 1935; the association generally showed activity for acquiring political rights.<sup>55</sup> *Türk Kadınlar Birliđi* changed its regulations by pointing out that the challenge for taking the right to vote of women would be maintained intensively in a widespread participated congress in Istanbul in 25<sup>th</sup> March 1927 before the general elections. Nezihe Muhiddin expressed that Turkish women couldn't progress in social life unless they participated in political life, Turkish women reached to a level that they were able to speak in politics and the association had to challenge towards acquiring political rights.<sup>56</sup> At the end of the congress, a common declaration including demands for equal status with men on right to vote and for voting in 1927 general election was sent to Turkish Grand National Assembly but government didn't approve this declaration.

Demands of women for right to vote were assessed as extremist by government and public opinion at those times. Government required that a more moderate group to come to the management of *Türk Kadınlar Birliđi* that expressed their demands for voting in an excessive manner and was effective in struggle for

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<sup>55</sup> Zülal Kılıç, "Cumhuriyet Türkiye'sinde Kadın Hareketine Genel Bir Bakış", Ayşe Berktaş Hacımırzaođlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.348

<sup>56</sup> Zehra Toska, "Cumhuriyet'in Kadın İdeali: Eşliđi Aşanlar ve Aşamayanlar", p.84

political rights. It is exposed as reason that Nezihe Muhiddin and her friends executed managerial infraction of rules and decided them to be demoted.<sup>57</sup> New group appointed to the management of association didn't give up demanding political rights but carried out this challenge by establishing more close relations with government.

The struggle of *Türk Kadınlar Birliđi* about political rights encouraged some foundations such as Turkish Associations. Women assembled in Turkish Associations expressed that women had to acquire political rights through some organizations such as seminars, symposiums, and conferences. In this period, government that strived to shape woman based on her housewife and motherhood roles emphasized that the participation of women in political associations might cause to neglect their houses and children.

After 1930 election in which challenge for acquiring right to vote for women didn't give any results, activities of women in political areas accelerated. Women who wanted to vote in 1935 general election organized a great assembly in 1934 by participation of prominent women of that time in the organization of Ankara Turkish Association and thereafter came to the Turkish Grand National Assembly and informed Atatürk about their demands for political rights.

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<sup>57</sup> Ayşagül Yaraman, *Resmi tarihten Kadın tarihine*, p.156

Government decided to grant women the right to vote and be elected in 5<sup>th</sup> December 1934. In this way, women could vote in 1935 general election.<sup>58</sup> Turkish Grand National Assembly granted women the right to participate in committee of mukhtar in villages in 26<sup>th</sup> October 1933.<sup>59</sup> 18 female deputies elected into Grant Assembly of 1935-39. Female deputies, with a percentage of 4,5% in this term, were elected by Ataturk.

Ataturk concentrated on democratization activities in 1930s, because he was anxious about that Republic regime would be criticized in West as a dictatorship due to the existence of single-part parliamentary system. Therefore Republican People's Party was closed down after perceiving the opposing as a threat in 1930. In this context, for obtaining appearance towards democratization in country, right to vote and be elected were granted women. Therefore, granting political rights to women bears a symbolic sense in discrimination of republic regime and demonstrating as a democratic regime. Feminist women didn't find the renovation established by Turkish Civil Law satisfactory in terms of women's rights and attempted to fight for political rights. In this period, government intended to dissolve the current feminist movement to be a threat against regime as it declared for political rights by granting women political rights therefore allowing no opposing formations that might be shaped around identities of religion, race and sexuality. At this point, it was emphasized that the acquisition of the right to vote by women was a development for the benefit of regime rather than women.

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<sup>58</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.119

<sup>59</sup> Ayşegül Yaraman, *Türkiye'de kadınların siyasal temsili*, Bağlam Yayınları,1999, p.50

In the period until the annulment of single-party parliamentary system in 1945, there were 15 female deputies in 1939-1943 Turkish Grand National Assembly and 16 female deputies in 1943-1946 Turkish Grand National Assembly. 60% of female deputies elected to Turkish Grand National Assembly were graduated from university and 30% were graduated from high school. 60% of university graduates were teachers.<sup>60</sup> Subjects taken into agenda of Turkish Grand National Assembly by female deputies in single-party era included problems of children, social security, education and health but not equality declaration. In the single-party era, women were encouraged to work in charity institutions or charity houses for the sake of development of country and to be symbols of resolutions of Republic provided that they comply with regime. But in this period, women's associating independent from regime was obstructed.<sup>61</sup>

A difference of opinion related to the annulment of association had born in the constitution of *Türk Kadınlar Birliği* between moderates who set forth that they reached their goals after the acquisition of right to vote and be elected and radicals who advocated that the light of women's rights had not come to end yet. Government encouraged the members of the association to work in Charity houses established in those times, for resolutions. Future of association was discussed in a congress organized in Istanbul in 18<sup>th</sup> April 1935. As a result of this congress, in which difference of views were seen between moderates who found the granted rights

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<sup>60</sup> Yeşim Arat, "Türkiye'de Kadın Milletvekillerinin Değişen Siyasal Rollerini, 1934-1980", Ayşe Bertay Hacımırzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.256

<sup>61</sup> Ayşe Durakbaşı, "Cumhuriyet Döneminde Modern Kadın ve Erkek Kimliklerinin Oluşumu: Kemalist Kadın Kimliği ve Münevver Erkekler", Ayşe Bertay Hacımırzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.39

sufficient and being active for resolutions and radicals who found that the rights weren't satisfactory and association had to continue, moderates who took the support of government won and it was decided to annul *Türk Kadınlar Birliği*. Nezihe Muhiddin applied to the membership of Republican People's Party to be an independent candidate in elections after the annulment of the association, but her demand was denied.<sup>62</sup> Annulment of *Türk Kadınlar Birliği* has formed an important obstruct on the feminist formation, which could have reached a comprehensive level, in the sense that its content had been enriched by adding fight for political rights of Turkish women into the women's rights declaration in Ottoman women's movement remained from the last terms of Ottoman that modernization line was dominating. The annulment of association and ending of the feminist movement has been a new beginning for women. Resolutions in Republic regime being carried out mostly as the result of modernization policies not by the demand of women is an important factor of feminist activities' getting into standstill period after 1940s. Women couldn't assume and describe their own problems. As a result of this situation, women movement that has accelerated by acquiring political rights lost its effectiveness. After that, women could show existence in social areas by contributions to Republican regime. For carrying out this duty, women had to bear the responsibility for educating the nation besides being a mother and housewife. In this context, women performing teaching profession were described as the symbols of Republic in this period.

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<sup>62</sup> Ayşegül Yaraman, *Türkiye'de Kadınların Siyasal Temsili*, Bağlam Yayınları, 1999, p.48

Women's getting a profession was found necessary for the development of the country. The reason of first republican women's demands for performing a profession and taking place in public area was not to constitute a woman identity that would emerge by appearing in public area by considering only women's needs as feminists emphasized. This situation is also a result of Republican women's movement complying with the demands of government towards studies in sense of resolutions by pushing their women identities to of a minor importance and taking national identities in forth that Republican regime shaped. At this point, it is necessary to assess developments experienced in education, which is an important step for women to appear in public area.

### **1.3.1.3 Relevant Developments in Education**

Ataturk supported education of women as it would take a great part in improvement of future generations rather than considering it as a right. He considered motherhood as the most important duty of women. Atatürk emphasized education as an important factor of transformation of traditional patterns of thinking into modern and secular view.

Developments in education brought forth in the period before proclaiming of republic constituted the formation of women's movement that was effective in those times through mass media as well as raising intellectual women. Efforts in education of women had maintained after the proclaiming of republic. Number of all girls' schools had increased for allowing women to benefit from education as men do. But



although all these efforts carried out about this topic, number of all girls' schools remained rather small. While percentage of literate women was 4,7% in 1927, the percentage of men was 17.4%. There was no all girls' junior high school between 1923 and 1927 in Turkey. In following year, the number of all boys' junior high school had decreased to 72 but the number of all girls' junior high school had increased to 8. In the academic term of 1925-1926, the number of all boys' junior high school had decreased to 54 but the number of all girls' junior high school had increased to 15.<sup>63</sup>

In the first years of republican regime, a mentality that was far away from egalitarian environment and in which traditional sexuality roles were repeated dominated the society. In this period, while mixed education was effective in only primary schools and universities, the discrimination was still vivid in junior high schools and high schools. By Tevhid-i Tedrisat Kanunu (Code on Unification of Teaching) went into effect in 1924, firm decisions were taken about secularization of system of education, management of education system by only one power and education at equal degrees. By this law, mentality of discrimination in course programs of education system, which was standardized, maintained its position. Implementation of mixed education had begun by the academic year of 1927-28 in junior high schools. Mixed education in high schools has been put into practice merely in city centers that have only one high school in the academic year of 1934-35. In this period, while mixed education was effective, discrimination in

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<sup>63</sup> Zehra Toska, "Cumhuriyet'in Kadın İdeali: Eşiği Aşanlar ve Aşamayanlar", p.64

professional and technical schools remained still. Items of courses in professional schools contained a discrimination mind based on sexuality. Items such as house economy, child care, course of food and sewing appear in the course programs of all girl institutes called as all girls' schools. All girls' professional schools aimed to promote the cultural levels of girls and to have them educated as qualified industrial workers couldn't go far beyond reinforcing their traditional roles of being a mother and housewife.

Although some modifications were executed in course programs and a standardized system was obtained in late of 1930s, discrimination endured in some fields. The increase in the number of women benefit from education opportunity in this period had created patriarchal patterns in old and new sections of society again, when unequal regulations and traditional implementations in course programs were taken into consideration.

#### **1.3.1.4. Women in the areas of Labor/Social Work**

A vigorous industrialization effort is seen in the first years of republic regime. A great development obtained in this field required a social metamorphosis. In this process of modification, some activities were carried out relevant to arrangement of labor life of women. As a result of this process, 1936 Code of Labor rearranged the working conditions of men, women and children. By this new code including new regulations for women, it is prohibited for women to work 3 weeks before birth as

well as confinement was determined as 3 weeks and paying a half salary to women who work within the period of birth permission was made to become law.<sup>64</sup> By code of labor, employing women in heavy works underground or underwater such as in mines and sewer systems was prohibited. By this code that regulated the labor life of women, any regulations relevant to agriculture in which a great section of women were employed were not arranged. This code is an important development as extracting a legitimate arrangement to labor life of women although it has some deficiencies. The number of female workers in industrial sector has increased by the improvement of industrialization in Turkey. In terms of progress towards democratization, some modifications are taken into agenda relevant to code in effect.

### **1.3.2 Relevant, Later Developments during the Period of Multi-Party Politics**

Single party regime dominating political system since the proclaiming of republic was replaced by multiparty parliamentary system by the foundation and rise of Democratic Party after 1945. We observe that women's movement has been stable since 1950. In this section, I will try to refer to developments relevant to women in the period between 1950 and 1980, when women question is taken into agenda actively.

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<sup>64</sup> Leyla Kırkpınar, "Türkiye'de Toplumsal Değişme Sürecinde Kadın", Ayşe Berktaş Hacımiraçoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.25

### 1.3.2.1 Women in Political Life: the Issue of Representation

Allowing a an opposition party take place in Turkish Grand National Assembly that is directed by a party in power in multiparty era bring forth an alteration in the function of Turkish Grand National Assembly. Well then, female deputies entered in Turkish Grand National Assembly who undertook the representation of their party as well as Kemalist reforms. Women extracted their partial identities in front of their sexual identities by the multiparty era.<sup>65</sup> 9 women in 1946-1949 (1.81%), 3 women in 1950-51 (0.61%), 4 women in 1954 (0.75%), 9 women in 1957 (1.35%) and 3 women in 1961 (0.67%) had taken place in Turkish Grand National Assembly. <sup>66</sup> Female members of parliamentary number of who has decreased gradually were highly educated women. In this period, female deputies again referred mostly to the subjects of children, education and health.

Democratic Party that came into power after general election of 1950 stated the groups intellectually and culturally independent from center to meet on a common platform. By Democratic Party's coming into power, the intellectual-bureaucrat constraint had come to an end. Leaders came to administration by election after 1950 transformed the governmental centered system dominating in Republic era into a party centered political system.<sup>67</sup> In this period, groups came together around their own interests from all sections of Turkish society achieved the creation of social discrimination. Ideological section shaped by nationalist and socialist trends in this

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<sup>65</sup> Ayşegül Yaraman, *Türkiye'de Kadınların Siyasal Temsili*, p.58

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*,p.55

<sup>67</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.124

period in Turkey constitutes another point of view of social discrimination. Nationalist ideology which dominated single-party era of Republic advocated the absolute sovereignty on individuals of state. With maintaining these characteristics, nationalist policy formed in multiparty era stressed the values belonging to historical and religious doctrines of society. Socialist group that took part in the formation of politics in this period referred mostly to secularism topic and expressed the elements of modernization. <sup>68</sup> In late of 1960s and 1970s, by the concept of "equality of sexualities" it was advocated that women are similar to men in the socialist perspectives relevant to women. While socialists defined equality in an idealistic manner, they encouraged women towards a mannish appearance in practice. <sup>69</sup>

Although a social discrimination appeared by the multiparty era, social groups assisted in formation of pluralist environment. In the participation of women, who obtained a symbolic characteristic in the democratization process after the proclaiming of Republic, into political area, a decrease was perceived after 1950 in the political environment that multiparty era brought forth. The representation percentage of women in Turkish Grand National Assembly has decreased in new political conjuncture based on competitive environment by the end of the single party era that government provided a political identity to women strategically. Women in Turkey couldn't benefit from developments towards modernization fully. Participation of women into public area in Republic era remains as minority. In this respect, it is observed that women were not able to utilize these opportunities on a

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.,p.125

<sup>69</sup> Ayşe Kadioğlu, "Cinselliğin İnkarı:Büyük Toplumsal Projelerin Nesnesi Olarak Türk Kadınları", Ayşe Bertay Hacımırzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler* , Tarih Vakfı Yayınları,1998, p.98

large scale. Deniz Kandiyoti expressed that traditional patriarchal values still control women who couldn't obtain freedom because of traditional patterns assumed by women in a cultural sense, which would be released by renovations relevant to women after proclaiming of republic in Turkey.<sup>70</sup> If it is considered that traditional values and patterns in society dominate cultural behaviors of women, it is observed that modernization movement couldn't reach to the level aimed and in this context women couldn't get free.

### **1.3.2.2 Women in the areas of Labor/Social Work**

It is observed that number of female workers increase in industrial sector that is in progress since 1950. While total percentage of women forms 43% of total labor, this percentage has increased gradually; namely 40,3% in 1965, 37,9% in 1965, 37,5 in 1970, and 32,5% in 1975. Percentage of women workers has increased from 17,8% to 37,8% except for agriculture. If the period between 1955 and 1975 is considered, it is determined that in agriculture 46% men and 53,4% women; in industry 87,1% men and 12,9% women; in service sector 92,4% men and 7,6% women were employed. In 1975, it is found that in agriculture 50% men and 50% women; in industry 85,5% men and 11,5% women; in service sector 87,4% men and

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<sup>70</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.127

12,6% women are employed.<sup>71</sup> The proportion of women in the offices of Mayor was 4% in 1960.<sup>72</sup>

As a result of a progress in education of women, women could make a good showing in enterprises. The greatest development seen in women's labor in Turkey is in service sector especially in public administration. Number of female officials increased from 12.716 to 277.622 from 1938 to 1978 respectively. Women particularly took part in public administration especially at lower and middle positions. Women tended to work in social purpose sectors in governmental service; namely tourism, health and social security. The scarcity of number of women laborers in local administrations located in rural areas is perceived as a result of a traditional response against women's working.<sup>73</sup>

The cultural status of women shaped by traditions and religious values caused that women remain in a secondary positions continuously. Women's rights' becoming widespread remained as insufficient among women in rural areas where social attitude is perceived vigorously. Even women dwelling in urban places who could benefit from reforms relevant to women service to remove the limitations in traditional men-women relationship after proclaiming of republic couldn't get rid of the traditional social constraint. According to a survey carried out in 1973, married women between 15 and 49 of age want their daughters to select professions such as especially housewife, then teacher, nurse, midwife, tailor, doctor and pharmacist.

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<sup>71</sup> Leyla Kırkpınar, "Türkiye'de Toplumsal Değişme Sürecinde Kadın", p.25

<sup>72</sup> Hayat Kabasakal, "Türkiye'de Üst Düzey Kadın Yöneticilerin Profili", Ayşe Berktaş Hacımiraçoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.303

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p.25

Professions that mothers want their sons to select are doctor, teacher, engineer and architect, official and officer.<sup>74</sup> In the republican era, women were subjected to a discrimination based on sexuality and as a result of this situation an increase was perceived in the number of women working in superior professions in Turkey although patriarchal traditional values are recreated. The percentage of women employed in professions especially in law and medicine had increased after the World War II.. Percentage of female lawyers increased gradually; namely while this percentage was 10% until 1960, increased to 12,72%, and then 28,54% in 1960 and 1978 respectively. While the percentage of women employed in Faculty of Medicine was under 10% in 1950, this percentage increased up to 25% in 1970s.<sup>75</sup>

Women seen in social, political and economical platforms between 1950 and 1980 couldn't achieve to establish a feminist association and realize an independent women movement. Since women living in eastern regions can only get in contact with modern governmental associations through their men faithful to powerful patriarchal structures such as chiefs of tribes, lords or sheiks of tariqat, these women couldn't become equal citizens. As a result of this situation they become devoted to local power authorities more.<sup>76</sup> In this context, when the continuousness of traditional formation in eastern regions is considered, the renovations introduced by government relevant to women couldn't become diffused spaciouly and it is seen that women's rights issue addresses to a certain set of people.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.,p.27

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Deniz Kandiyoti,*Cariyeler, Bacular, Yurttaşlar* , p.216



However, we see that feminist movement burgeoned in 1980s underlies significant developments about women in this period until today.

### **1.3.3 The Emergence of Feminist Movement: A New Rise of Women Issue in the 1980s**

It is seen that feminist movement is refreshed after a long term at the beginnings of 1980s. Establishments such as political parties, labor unions, and foundations that directing the relation between government and society were closed as a result of political structure formed after 12<sup>th</sup> September. Government's breaking its bonds with society by this way led women to new searches for participation into politics. In 1982, women organized a symposium in which they discussed women subject in the constitution of YAZKO (Cooperation of writers and translators) and criticized unequal position of women in society.<sup>77</sup>

Women who want to sound in public opinion published a weekly review called *Somut* ("Concrete" –as opposed to abstract) in late 1982s. *Somut* had important contribution in women's overcoming some traditional patterns such as being a good wife, good mother, perfect sexual object and obtaining an individual identity. This review also served to form an atmosphere of solidarity among women in intellectual area.<sup>78</sup> Women tended to a political association independent from government, political parties and other social institutions in *Somut*. In 1983, Women's Circle that is aimed at promotion and marketing of in-house and out-house

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<sup>77</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.143

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p.145

goods of women and gives mass media and consultation services in order to provide cultural communication was established.

Feminists had begun to organize in associations, foundations, and companies by 1984.<sup>79</sup> In this period, feminist movement accelerated by participation of girls from universities and women issue had become one of the main themes emphasized in books, researches, reviews and films. Feminist themes tailored in films reached to many women from many section of society and provided them to interrogate their own positions and assess things experienced around them in a different view.

For the first time, after celebration of International Women's Day on the 8<sup>th</sup> March 1985, it is seen that feminist formation shifted into action. In this period, Turkish women arranged demonstrations on street in order to protest discrimination and unequal applications towards women, dominating daily life. In this period, it is seen that feminist groups went into action followed-up distinct lines contextually. Liberal feminism, which advocates the individual freedom of women and being equal with men, came to the fore in Turkey in feminist movement. Media means of this feminist group is a magazine called *Kadınca* that was first published in 1984. In feminist platforms in which social and radical feminists took place, these groups went beyond the equality fact and discussed emancipation of women. In mass media social feminists are represented by *Sosyalist Feminist Kaktüs* (Socialist Feminist Cactus) review, and a magazine called *Feminist* represents radical feminists.<sup>80</sup> These

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<sup>79</sup> Zülal Kılıç, "Cumhuriyet Türkiyesi'nde Kadın Hareketine Genel Bir Bakış", Ayşe Berktaş Hacımırzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.355

<sup>80</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.148

groups whom declaration manners are different participated in operational activities are organized in public area commonly.

In 1986, feminist women had begun a sign campaign for CEDAW's (Contract of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) coming into force in Turkey. They arranged a march against beating in Istanbul in 1987. They took the social problems of women into agenda by a sign campaign called Mor Igne (Purple Needle). They arranged to protest sexual annoyance and campaigns against virginity control and indecent assault.

In operational activities of feminist groups, we see that they set their reactions against legitimate policies that they described as opposed to women. In this context, feminists criticize many clauses of Turkish Civil Law.

After 1980, feminist women conspicuous with operational activities in critical plan also tended to institutionalism through some associations. In 1987, Association Against Discrimination Against Women was established to challenge for formation and supporting of an order discarding patriarchal institutions effective in women's not coming to an equal position in economical, political and cultural life in public. Women Solidarity Association, established in Ankara in the same year has a similar point of view. Women Solidarity Association established in 1986 celebrates 8<sup>th</sup> March International Women's Day, it aims to arrange conferences and support women in physical and physiologic manner. Women Culture House was established

in 1989 for taking women out of houses and integrating them with universal cultural values, but had a short life and was closed in 1990.<sup>81</sup>

Other women associations were present with these feminist associations in 1980s. “Foundation for the Empowerment and Promotion of the Turkish Women”, established by Semra Ozal in 1986, carried on activities to develop women’s solidarity in eastern regions in agricultural, cultural, arts and politics, economics, and social areas and proclaim the social, economic and cultural level of Turkish women to whole world, but it didn’t last so much.

The Foundation of Assessing Women Labor aims to take in-house labor of women to a beneficial degree and therefore improve women’s socio-economic status. Women Association in Democracy Challenge (DEMKAD) was established in 1988 for preparing the ground of challenge with mutual support of men and associating activities of laborer women to solve the socio-economic problems of women, but it was closed in 1992. Another association established in 1988 was Democratic Women Association aimed to modify the economic and social mechanisms that reveal women to a secondary position because of their sexual identity.<sup>82</sup>

The role of women in Islamic movements has got importance after 1980. Some Islamic women’s reviews are published in this period; namely *Kadın ve Aile* (Woman and Family), *Mektup ve Bizim Aile* (Letter and Our Family) and *Bizim Aile*

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<sup>81</sup> Zülal Kılıç, “Cumhuriyet Türkiyesi’nde Kadın Hareketine Genel Bir Bakış”, p.355

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p.356

(Our Family). Headscarf crisis in universities appeared as an area in which politic Islam conflicts with government and it maintains its place in agenda today. Kemalist women who perceive political Islam as a threat tended to new associations after 1980. The most spacious of them is *Çağdaş Yaşamı Destekleme Derneği* (Association for the Support of Contemporary Life), established in 1989. Objects of this association are preservation, development, becoming widespread of women's rights developed as a result of revolution of Atatürk and maintaining freedom of women in political, economic, social, legal and cultural areas.<sup>83</sup>

Women shelters were associated in the constitution of governments for survival of women exposed to violence in their houses in late 1980s. As a result of efforts on the issue, first women shelter called Woman's Shelter Foundation was established in Izmir in 1988.<sup>84</sup>

In 1980s, women's problems were discussed around issues such as abortion, beating, Turkish Civil Law, having a job and profession.<sup>85</sup> Some political parties tried to be effective in women activities to gain women's votes by taking the awakening of women into consideration through the declarations of women highly educated and effective in media. For this reason; an activity schedule has been constituted in which different points of views are reflected from the non-radical associations such as Foundation of Recognition of Turkish Women and Foundation of Protecting Mothers of Martyrs and volunteered foundations that were active in

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.183

<sup>85</sup> Ayşe Güneş-Ayata, "Laiklik, Güç ve Katılım Üçgeninde Türkiye'de Kadın ve Siyaset", Ayşe Berktaş Hacımirzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.241

order to protect and modify the status of women in society to religious associations that criticize the secular regime and advocate that the emancipation of women could only be achieved by Islam orders.

A significant progress has been perceived in the appearance of women in political life in Turkey after 1980. Although the appearance of women in political activities was raised after 1980, women were taking place in decision mechanisms insufficiently. 4% of 400 deputies in Turkish Grand National Assembly in 1983 were women. The proportion of women in the offices of Mayor was 2% in 1984. Political parties of this term encouraged women to participate into politics. In addition, they struggled to produce solutions to women problems as to their point of view. In this period, women seem to have participated in political movements outside of political foundations of women from political Islamic women's movement to radical feminists.<sup>86</sup>

In this period, although political parties made some efforts to raise the participation of women into politics, they did nothing to alter the position of women based on sexuality and to interrogate the patriarchal values.

An outstanding women movement has maintained in academic area, self-owned business, fine arts and literature, public administration and some positions in private sector as the result of the regulations' comprising a long-term process about

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p.247

education of women that was one of the important items of agenda of legal ideology in Republican era.

Turkish women have progressed significantly in economic life. Percentage of women workers is found to be 53% in agriculture, 13% in industry and 8% in service sector. Percentages of men are 47% in agriculture, 87% in industry and 92% in service sector.<sup>87</sup> 32% of academic staff was women in 1989. In the same year, it was found that the ratio of women in all administrative positions of universities was 15,9%.<sup>88</sup> Women had to struggle individually to have a part in labor life since they hadn't got a wide participation in economic life as they had in educational life.

The rate of literate women were 68% in 1985, while men were 86%. The percentage of girls having education in primary school reached to 47%, in junior high school to 35%, and in high school to 43% between the years 1986 and 1987. The percentage of girls having education in universities was raised to 32% in the academic year of 1987-88.<sup>89</sup> These numeric indications attract attentions onto the great stage that women achieved in educational area.

It is seem that feminist women of 1980s emphasized on defining woman identity differently from having Republican women. Turkish feminist movement took women problems that were paid insufficient attention to such as abortion, annoyance and indecent assault in family into public agenda. In this period, feminist

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<sup>87</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.126

<sup>88</sup> Hayat Kabasakal, "Türkiye'de Üst Düzey Kadın Yöneticilerin Profil", p.303

<sup>89</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.126

formation redefined fundamental social rules such as sexuality of women, identification analysis and bore new meaning on them. Feminists kept political parties under pressure and in this context they were effective in government's tending to new institutionalisms about women.

Perceiving social differentiation as a threat to nation's benefits in Turkish political culture is a significant element in maintaining the homogenous structure of society. Religious women and feminist groups appeared after 1980 inverted this homogeneity concept in Turkish political structure. Women participating in these two groups demanded to take place with their own identities in public life.

#### **1.3.4 Women Movement Taking New Shape during the 1990s**

A tendency to constitutionalism in women movement was significant in 1990s. *Mor Çatı Kadın Sığınağı Vakfı* (Purple Roof Woman's Shelter Foundation) established in 1990 aims to open houses for women exposed to violence at home and to facilitate their participation in professional life and it also serves for legal and physiologic consultation. Another institution established for serving consultation to women whom exposed to violence is Women Solidarity Foundation, established in 1993 in Ankara.<sup>90</sup>

Feminist women that focused on the necessity of a library in which women opus are gathered, founded "Library of Women's Works and Information Center" in

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<sup>90</sup> Zülal Kılıç, "Cumhuriyet Türkiye'si'nde Kadın Hareketine Genel Bir Bakış" , p.357



1990.<sup>91</sup> In this period, women problematic became an important issue in the agenda of researches of academic institutions. Some women research centers have been established in a number of universities from 1990. Women researches have been included in master's degree programs in these centers. In this context, publications about women problematic subject to research projects have been issued. Very first of these centers is "Women's Research and Education Center", constituted in Istanbul University.<sup>92</sup> Women Research Association was founded in 1991 in order to carry out scientific researches about women in education, culture, rights and health fields. Women Human Rights Action Research Center, founded in 1993, contends with ending the discrimination that women are exposed to.<sup>93</sup>

A number of groups from Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Gaziantep that have different point of views came together at women platforms in 1990s and struggled to spread feminist movement over country in order to obtain solidarity in certain subjects.

A "General Directorate for Women's Affairs" that is affiliated with "Ministry of Labor" was established in 1990 by a governmental decree law. This establishment has transformed to a ministry of state in 1993. Clauses described as being against to women's rights in law codes were annulled. Information Application Bank (3B) was established in 1994 under this ministry in order to serve in legal and psychological consultation, entrepreneurship and utilization of labor of women exposed to violence

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<sup>91</sup> Ömer Çaha, *Sivil Kadın*, p.184

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Zülal Kılıç, "*Cumhuriyet Türkiye'si'nde Kadın Hareketine Genel Bir Bakış*", p.357

at home.<sup>94</sup> Four Commissions focused on women problems in four areas were established by the participation of volunteer women associations under the organization of this ministry after 4<sup>th</sup> Universal Women Conference; namely education, health, legitimate rights and employment.<sup>95</sup>

In July of 1991 for the first time a woman was appointed to the governorship of a city. Three women were appointed to lieutenant colonel in 1992 for the first time. In this period in Turkey; women were appointed to some official works in departments of ministries that were extended parts of in-house roles such as social services, women rights, and health as well as economics, labor, and domestic affairs. The proportion of women in the offices of Mayor was 4% in 1994. The proportion of female deputies in the general election in December of 1999 was 4,3% in spite of all these developments in political field. The number of female deputies that was 18 in 1935 has decreased to 6 in 1991 although the participation of women in education has increased widely.

Most organizations of women appeared out of the political mechanisms in the period between the beginning and the second half of 1990s in Turkey. While a number of organizations tried to create solutions to the women problematic by constituting a public opinion concerning this problem, some struggled in order to change the regime. But even organizations that are active for changing the regime don't struggle enough to participate in politics. KADER (The Association to Support

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<sup>94</sup> "*Türkiye'de kadın 2001*", T.C. Başbakanlık Kadının Statüsü ve Sorunları Genel Müdürlüğü, 2001, p.7

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p.10

and Train Female Candidate for Parliament) established in 1997, intends to increase the proportion of participation of women in political positions and state administration, to achieve that representation rights of female voters are equal to men and to strengthen democracy. Appointment of women in political field is advocated, as it was a quite important progress of women movement. The cooperation of women represented in political field with women organizations may function as a buffer at the point of reflecting developments in political area to social area.<sup>96</sup>

In this period, socialists continued to their publication activities through the review named *Pazartesi*, which they had been publishing since 1995. Another feminist group has founded *Uçan Süpürge* (The Flying Broom) and published *Uçan Haberler* (The Flying News).

Women issue has continued to occupy an important part in the agenda of various social groups in 1990s and 2000s. In 1990s, feminist groups sounded on international platforms by institutionalized activities rather than activities on street. As a part of this effort, “The Festival For Women Movies” is being organized regularly each year since 1998.<sup>97</sup> Turkish women groups such as conservatives, leftists, and Kemalists that form feminists take part in Habitat meetings regularly. Women in these groups represent Turkey in meetings that United Nations organized about women.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Zülal Kılıç, “Cumhuriyet Türkiyesi’nde Kadın Hareketine Genel Bir Bakış”, p.360

<sup>97</sup> Ömer Çaha, “The Role of Women in the Formation of Civil Society in Turkey, p.5

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

Themes tailored by a review named *Kadınca*, which is effective in publication life as the representative of egalitarian liberal feminism in 1980s and 1990s, are currently discussed by many women reviews in Turkey. Egalitarianism concept advocated by liberal feminists comprises equality in professional life, matrimonial life and social life.<sup>99</sup> Difference and pluralism concepts appear as the items of the main agenda of Turkish egalitarian feminists. Radical feminists don't find special rights granted to women in an entire patriarchal culture satisfactory. But socialist feminists advocate that women can be rescued from the constraint of men through realization of politicization in special areas such as division of labor based on sexuality, violence and motherhood in family.<sup>100</sup>

After 1990s, traditional religious groups as one of the groups that deal with women problems actively published various women magazines, constituted foundations and are active under constitution of some parties.<sup>101</sup> This group has struggled to sound on streets against headscarf prohibition applied in schools throughout 1990s. Women in this group emphasized that Islam doesn't carry out a division of labor based on sexuality and therefore demands of women using headscarf could be brought into life in terms of participation into public life.

Participation of women in labor was approximately 30% in 1990s. In this context, proportion of women who defined themselves as housewife was 82%. A general immigration from village to city has been a significant factor of the decrease

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., p.6

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., p.7

<sup>101</sup> Ibid

in participation of women into labor since 1950s. Women who worked mostly as non-salaried agricultural laborers in country, become housewife as they stay out of professional life when they migrate to large cities.<sup>102</sup> Women most of whom are located especially as wife and mother in social and matrimonial life get no chance to participate in labor as they don't have required characteristics because their parents don't permit them to benefit from educational possibilities sufficiently. In addition it is seen that most of women who participate in professional life quit their jobs because of marriage or having a child. Although employment of women is at lower degrees, the proportion of highly educated and professional women in scientific and technical areas is quite high.<sup>103</sup> While it is supported that a small number of women belonging to high class and benefiting from possibility equality that Republican reforms had created to be professionals and to be active in some fields such as engineering, medical and law, other women are deprived of educational possibilities as a result of obstructing attitude seen in social structure dominated by traditional values.

Most women in rural areas work in agriculture. Some problems in this group in which the employment level is high; can be stated as unsalaried working, difficult working conditions, lack of social security, and men's holding the incomes of salaried workers. Employment level of professional and highly educated women is also high. This group in which working conditions such as physical, social security and salary are best also meets some serious difficulties; namely manager men's

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<sup>102</sup> İpek İlkaracan, "Kentli Kadınlar ve Çalışma Yaşamı", Ayşe Berktaş Hacımırzaoğlu (ed.), 75 *Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.285

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p.386

constituting obstacle on the progress of women workers and sexual harassment. It is observed that city-dweller women migrated from country to city are mostly employed in manufacturing industry and service sector in which working conditions are quite difficult and salaries are very low. Women's obtaining their economical freedom appears as a significant factor towards alteration of their secondary positions in family life and society. But in rural regions in which participation of women into agricultural labor is widespread and no privilege is granted to women, employment has no relation with status of women in family. However we observed that employment in urban areas provides women prestige and privilege and this situation influences the status of women in family life positively. A significant metamorphosis appears in the status of women who migrate from country to city and find opportunity for working and have ability to reflect this to their lives. <sup>104</sup>

In the period after 1980, developments in favor of women have a significant role in execution of more egalitarian regulations in Turkish Civil Law and Penal Code of Turkey relevant to women. Amendments made in Turkish Civil Law in 2001 include important regulations about women. The clause that considers legal residence of woman to be the same as her husband is annulled. By this new law, legal domicile may be a new common residence determined by wife and husband together or the residences of the part that obtained right to live separately by judge. <sup>105</sup> Age of marriage is stipulated to be 18 without discrimination of sexuality. In extraordinary situations, people who have passed 17 by a few days may be able to get married by

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<sup>104</sup> Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı, "Türkiye'de Kadının Statüsü: Kültürler Arası Perspektifler", Ayşe Berktaş Hacımirzaoğlu (ed.), *75 Yılda Kadınlar ve Erkekler*, Tarih Vakfı Yayınları, 1998, p.151

<sup>105</sup> Arife Gökkaya, "Medeni Kanun'daki Değişiklikler Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme", *Umran*, 2002, p.18

the permission of judge.(124) Clause of behavior of injuring pride is added to clauses of intention to life and extremely bad behavior affiliated with divorce causes.(162) While it is required to pass 3 months for suiting in situations of abandonment according to former act, this period is increased to 6 months according to new act.<sup>106</sup> Divorced woman gets her maiden surname after divorce.(173) Both spouses are obliged to contribute to livelihood of house through their labor and estates by their level best.(186) The clause in which “Husband is the head of matrimonial unity” is annulled; equal rights are granted to both spouses in management of unity.(188) It is accepted that each spouse does not need to have to get the other’s permission in selection of professional and job.(192) It is approved that participating in acquired properties is accepted as legal regime of property. Spouses may be able to select other property regimes determined in Act by agreeing upon property regime contract.

“Turkish Bar Association Women Jurists Commission” (TUBAKKOM) was established in 20<sup>th</sup> March 1999 in order to maintain the coordination between Women Rights/Law Commissions constituted in the body of lawyers. Number of these commissions is about 40 in 2001.<sup>107</sup>

Equality and unequal sexual treatment have been set forth into the items of agenda with women movement but these feminist uttering doesn’t have adequate effect in modification of women’s positions and patriarchal structure of social culture. In this context, feminist movement developed after 1980 wasn’t able to

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.,p.19

<sup>107</sup> “Türkiye’de Kadın 2001” , p.13

carry out great alteration in mentality of society. Traditional implementations such as bride's price and betrothing while still an infant that are contrary to marriage provisions in Turkish Civil Law are still kept going on in rural region.<sup>108</sup> According to the results of 1993 Population and Health Survey in Turkey, 89% of marriages were found to be both legal and religious, 7,5% is merely religious and 3,2% are merely legal. In 28,6% of marriages, bride's price is paid and in 22,6% of marriages are between relatives.<sup>109</sup> This situation indicates that society is adapting its traditions to legal texts and make legislator accept its traditions.

According to data of 1998 Governmental Statistical Institute 22,4% of women isn't literate. 51,1% of them is primary school, 9,9% is high school and 2,8% is college graduates. As a result of this survey, it is found that women are educated under average education level in Turkey.<sup>110</sup> We see that percentage of literate women is 25,5% in 2000. This percentage is determined as 55,8% for men. This reveals that number of literate men is twice of literate women in Turkey.<sup>111</sup> The difference between women and men based on access to education couldn't be removed in spite of some egalitarian regulations executed at legal level. Girls working especially in rural areas at house works, marrying them off in early ages and constraint attitude of traditional values are effective in formation of this situation.

In 1980s, feminism has become one of the important constituents of democratization of society. In this period, protesting limited rights and liberties,

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<sup>108</sup> İlber Ortaylı, *Osmanlı Toplumunda Aile*, p.165

<sup>109</sup> Prof Dr. Muammer Kaya, "*Türkiye'de kadına bakış*", <http://www.isguc.org>, p.2

<sup>110</sup> Muammer Kaya, p.2

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, p.1



which are granted by government, by feminist movement assisted in process of democratization. <sup>112</sup>

Turkish feminist women doesn't have significant succeed in carrying out a radical modification. While this women movement created an important conscious of feminism in urban areas, it served to the formation of a political power strengthened by pluralistic rather than a feminist government. <sup>113</sup>

If benefiting degrees of women from their legal rights is considered, it is seen that women are separated into groups. Women who don't use their legal rights granted by Turkish Civil Law are in rural areas and suburbs where peasants who migrated to city live. It is observed that most of women in rural region who do not have access to modern education facilities sufficiently and dominated by traditional forms of patriarchal system are unaware about their own legal rights. However, women living in urban areas that aware of their rights granted by law are able to benefit from opportunities of modern life. Women who are aware of civil and political rights couldn't be rescued from the constraint environment of matrimonial and social life.

If country is assessed thoroughly, it is seen that domination of inequality between sexualities seems to continue. In the Convention of Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), existence of behavior patterns based on

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<sup>112</sup> Yeşim Arat, "Women's Movement of the 1980s in Turkey: Radical Outcome of Liberal Kemalizm", in Fatma Müge Göcek and Shira Balaghi (eds.), *Reconstructing Gender in the Middle East : tradition, identity and power*, Colombia University Press, p.107

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p.110

consuetude, custom and religious and cultural traditions are pointed out at the origin of differentiating based on sexuality dominating society. Turkey has to remove woman-man roles based on sexuality in textbooks as being a part to this contract. In addition parallel to this application; traditional control mechanisms established on woman body such as virginity control, beating, genital disablement, indecent assault in matrimonial life or compelling for pregnancy have to be removed; implementations that are set on a legitimate background by religious and cultural values such as taking unequal shares from polygamy or inheritance, unilaterally divorce have to be obstructed especially in rural regions through a social alternation.

A modification in cultural elements that form the most resistant foundation of roles based on sexuality in matrimonial life is extremely important in order to provide a widespread improvement in social status of women. Dimensions of this modification will be effective in determining formation levels of egalitarian system. This egalitarian order would open the way of integration of women to society. Social integration necessitates the adoption of social norms, values and behavioral principles to individuals. Social integration which occurs in a certain process ensure the unity of individuals around common values and rules. During this process individuals become members of society. At this point, regional inequalities among women points out that women could not complete the process of being a member of the society in spite of reforms and regulations which were made from the foundation of Republic to this time. In the survey study employed in Marmara region which have the highest socio-economic income level and East Anatolia Region which have

lowest socio-economic income level points out that being unsuccessful in the process of social integration affects women in a negative way.

Women could not integrate to society because the adoption of reforms to society could not be put in effect. This situation reproduce the regional inequalities among women. In respect to social, economical, legal and cultural aspects, there are some differences between women who live in the region that reform movements lost their influences in front of traditional principles and women who live in the region in which that reforms become more influential.

The inequality between women who live under the control of traditional values, insufficient educational status, economical independency and do not have the consciousness of their rights because of the prohibition of public sphere as a result of traditional gender roles and women who have sufficient educational possibilities, high socio-economic and cultural level, and consciousness of their rights constitutes very important problems in social integration. In this circumstances, it is obvious that women could not reach the unity which social integration necessitates through the entire society. To ensure this kind of unity, it is possible to realize an important progress in elimination of regional inequalities among women with a change in social mentality as a production of studies which serve the development and expansion of women's rights .

The social transformation which would made in this way can constitute development of women's status. By the reflection of this development on women's

status to the entire society, social integration would be achieved. There should be studies in the society which would encourage the effort for realization of social integration.

Developments of women in sense of institutionalism continue in 2000s. In this continuity, to carry woman's rights concept to political grounds and integrating them with social conscious become important day by day.

The formal regulations which were made in the Republican era could not become widespread throughout the nation. Traditional patterns have to be modified in order to reach wide crowds in women's rights challenge that women will direct actively and execute a social metamorphosis in context of woman question. Woman organizations and governmental institutions, within cooperation, have to struggle to form a social conscious that will grant women a position that they deserved in order to remove the difference between the position of women in eastern regions where traditional behavior patterns that obstruct the reflection of developments and women recently achieved are mostly effective and the position of women in western region, and to improve a total concept in woman rights. We can see the necessity of this in my public survey that I will establish with concrete indicators more remarkably. The regional inequalities among women can be observed in my public survey which is the subject of next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE SURVEY STUDY EXEMPLIFYING THE REGIONAL INEQUALITIES AMONG WOMEN COVERING THE MARMARA AND EASTERN ANATOLIA REGIONS**

The starting point of this study is to make a general assessment pertaining to women in terms of education, culture, family, politics and health issues and to specify the regional inequalities among women.

For this survey, the Marmara Region has been selected to represent the region which has the highest socio-economical income level and the Eastern Anatolia Region has been selected to represent the lowest socio-economical income level and various ethnical environments. The cities selected for the survey study in the Marmara Region are Istanbul and Bursa while Van and Bitlis are selected for the field study in the Eastern Anatolia Region. This survey study is based on face to face interviews employed on 300 women from the Marmara Region and 200 women from the Eastern Anatolia Region between April – May 2004.

In order to obtain a systematic structure in the conclusion of the interview, a standard survey form has been prepared. The questions directed at the subjects in the scope of the survey have been prepared so as to elaborate the social and cultural levels of the women. The content of the questions in the survey form are gathered under eight main headings other than the classification of age and marital status and occupation: education, cultural status, social level, the level of political participation,

family life, the level of participation to business life, the level of health service and finally, a general overview of women's problems. Questions have been carefully designed to enable us to analyze the present status of the women in Turkey in terms of social integration. The whole survey consists of 36 questions. While specifying the number of surveys to be distributed in each city where would be the survey was carried out, the population density has been taken into consideration. The field study covers the center and the peripheral districts in all the cities. I will make a general evaluation in this part of the thesis and will have review of regional inequalities in terms of comparative analysis of the regions.

The subjects which the survey have been employed, set forth a distribution that presents diversity according to age groups. 37,4 percent of the subjects are in the age group of 26-35. This age group is the one that has the largest percentage in the research. The age category that has the least number of subjects corresponds to the group that consists of 60 and over. The subjects in Marmara Region and East Anatolia Region consist mostly of women in the 26-35 age group. (Table 1)

**Table 1 Age**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
18-25	18,3	20,5	19,2
26-35	40,3	33,0	37,4
36-45	30,0	26,5	28,6
46-60	9,7	18,0	13,0
60 and up	1,7	2,0	1,8
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0

59,8 percent of the subjects are married, 31,8 percent are single, 8,2 percent are widowed or divorced. In Marmara Region 48,7 percent of subjects are married, 42 percent of subjects are single and 9.3 percent of subjects are widowed or divorced. In East Anatolia Region 76,5 percent of subjects are married, 17 percent of subjects are single and 6,5 percent of subjects are widowed or divorced. (Table 2)

**Table 2 Marital Status**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Married	48,7	76,5	59,8
Single	42,0	17,0	31,8
Widowed or divorced	9,3	6,5	8,2
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0

The distribution of the groups participating in the survey in terms of profession distributed into 11 categories consisting of; tradesman, civil servant, retired, worker, student, self-employed, housewife, self-employed university graduate, farmer, unemployed and other. People working for the government in education, health, bureaucracy, security or services sectors and who have the civil servant status are gathered under the civil servant category. People working in public and private sectors with worker status are gathered under the worker category. Student category consists of university students whose ages are 18 and over. Within the professional distribution of the groups participating in the survey, housewives have the largest share with 41,2 percent. According to profession groups, 27 percent of women participating in the Marmara Region are housewives, 20 percent are workers, 10 percent are civil servants, 9,3 percent are self-employed university

graduates. In the Eastern Anatolia Region, 62.5 percent of the subjects are housewives, 16.5 percent are civil servants, 8 percent are students and 2.5 percent are unemployed. According to data, the percentage of housewives is lower in the Marmara Region, where urbanization and number of women with access to educational opportunities are intensive, compared with the Eastern Anatolia Region.

( Table 3)

**Table 3 Occupation**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Tradesman	3,0	1,5	2,4
Civil servant	10,0	16,5	12,6
Retired	5,7	2,5	4,4
Worker	20,0	1,5	12,6
Student	4,3	8,0	5,8
Self employed	9,0	1,5	6,0
Housewife	27,0	62,5	41,2
(University graduate) self employed	9,3	1,0	6,0
Farmer		,5	,2
Unemployed	5,3	2,5	4,2
Other	6,3	2,0	4,4
Total	100,0	100	99,8
No Response			,2
			100,0

## 2.1 Educational Status of Women

Subjects exhibit a wide distribution in terms of education. Among the subjects participating in the survey, high school category has the highest share with a percentage of 36,4. The education categories consisting of illiterates and people with post-graduate degrees are less than others. The ratio of illiterates in the Marmara



Region is 1.3 percent whereas this ratio is 16.5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. While 43.7 percent of the subjects in the Marmara Region are high school graduates, this ratio is 25.5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. In light of this information, the fact that the ratio of women benefiting from educational opportunities is lower in the eastern region in comparison with the Marmara region shows that education is not sufficiently widespread and women can not get a sufficient education in eastern region where there is a low level of urbanization. The educational opportunities being more widespread and the traditional prejudices and values regarding education of women being less effective in the western region in comparison with the eastern region has played an important role in these ratios being higher in the city. (Table 4.1)

**Table 4.1 Education status**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Illiterate	1,3	7,4	16,5
Elementary school	11,3	19,2	31,0
Junior high school	11,7	10,6	9,0
High school	43,7	36,4	25,5
University	27,3	23,0	16,5
Post-graduate	4,3	3,2	1,5
Total	99,7	99,8	100,0
No response	,3	,2	
	100,0	100,0	

When we asked the subjects to assess if women in Turkey get equal access to education with men, 85 percent of the subjects have answered no, 11 percent have answered yes and 4 percent have replied that they have no opinion. It is obvious from

these ratios that the majority of women participating in this survey are emphasizing the inequality between men and women in terms of access to educational opportunities. The educative system still discourages women from schooling. The ratio of those stating that women can not get an equal level of education has been determined as 90.7 percent in the Marmara Region, and 76.5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. (Table 4.2)

**Table 4.2 In your opinion, can women get equal education as men?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	8,7	14,5	11,0
No	90,7	76,5	85,0
I have no opinion	,7	9,0	4,0
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0

The share of women marking customs and traditions as the cause for this inequality is 59,6 percent, the share of those who have selected economical insufficiency is 16,8 percent, the share of those who have marked marriage at a young age is 7,0 percent and, the share of those who have marked the option of transportation difficulties is 1,4 percent. The fact that the percentage of customs and traditions has the highest rate shows that the repression of traditional values on women's schooling is felt intensively. The ratio of those stating that this inequality is resulting from customs and traditions is 63 percent in the Marmara region and 54.5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The statement of financial problems ranking second among the replies to this question has a ratio of 18.3 percent in the Marmara Region and 14.5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. Marriage at a young age

ranks third with a ratio of 8 percent in the Marmara region and 5.5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. We see that the top three ranking in these ratios is the same in both regions. These data show that the social values are perpetuating in the society and that the conviction about being deprived of education linked with these values is widespread among women. (Table 4.3)

**Table 4.3 In your opinion what is the reason for women to be deprived of education?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Custom/tradition	63,0	59,6	54,5
Marriage at a young age	8,0	7,0	5,5
Economical insufficiency	18,3	16,8	14,5
Difficulty in transportation	1,0	1,4	2,0
Other	1,0	1,0	1,0
All of the above	,7	1,8	3,5
Total	92,0	87,6	81,0
No response	8,0	12,4	19,0
	100,0	100,0	100,0

## 2.2 Cultural Status of Women

The answers we got to questions asked for measuring reading habits of women in order to specify their cultural levels, are not very heartening. The share of those who do not regularly read newspapers is found out to be 53 percent and the share of those who do not regularly read a magazine is 76,4 percent. In the replies given to the questions measuring the cultural levels of women, there are differences in both regions resulting from insufficiency of education. In Table 5.1, the ratio of

those who do not regularly read newspapers is 38.7 percent in the Marmara Region where as this ratio has been determined to be 74.5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. In Table 5.2, the ratio of those who do not read magazines regularly is 68.3 in the Marmara Region, whereas this ratio is 88.5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region.

**Table 5.1 Is there a newspaper that you regularly read?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
No	38,7	74,5	53,0
Zaman	4,7	3,0	4,0
Posta	7,0	3,0	5,4
Sabah	19,7	4,5	13,6
Hürriyet	13,0	1,0	8,2
Other	16,9	14,0	16,2
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0

**Table 5.2 Is there a magazine that you regularly read ?**

	Marmara Region		East Anatolia Region		General
No	68,3	No	88,5	No	76,4
Sızıntı	2,3	Sızıntı	2,0	Sızıntı	2,2
Elele	5,3	Ailem	2,0	Elele	3,2
Tempo	3,3	Bilim-teknik	2,0	Aktüel	4,0
Other	20,8	Other	5,0	Other	14,0
Total	100,0	Total	99,5	Total	99,8
		No Response	,5	No Response	,2
			100,0		100,0

In the category of the magazines, fashion/women's magazines have the largest share with 16,4 percent. Among the other options, intellectual-cultural

category ranks second with 16,2 percent. Regarding the types of magazines, fashion/women magazines rank first in the Marmara Region with a ratio of 24.7 percent, while intellectual-cultural magazines rank first in the Eastern Anatolia Region with a ratio of 11.5 percent. (Table 5.3)

**Table 5.3 What sort of magazines do you read?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Magazine	12,0	8,2	2,5
Intellectual-cultural	19,3	16,2	11,5
Science-technical	4,0	5,2	7,0
Fashion/women magazines	24,7	16,4	4,0
Decoration magazines	3,3	2,2	,5
Hand crafts/painting	1,7	1,8	2,0
Other	1,3	1,0	,5
All of the above	,7	,6	,5
Total	67,0	51,6	28,5
No Response	33,0	48,4	71,5
	100,0	100,0	100,0

44,6 percent of the subjects have indicated that they read books occasionally, 22,6 percent have indicated that they read books very frequently, 22 percent have stated that they rarely read books. The difference in the cultural level between the two regions can be observed in book reading habits. The ratio of women stating that they occasionally read books is 50.3 in the Marmara Region whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 36 percent. The ratio of subjects stating that they read books very frequently is 30.3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 11 percent. The ratio of subjects indicating that they rarely read books is 17.7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern

Anatolia Region this ratio is 28.5 percent. In light of these data it is observed that the book reading habit is less widespread in the Eastern Anatolia Region as compared to the Marmara Region. In East Anatolia Region women can not reach sufficient educational level because of traditional structure and economical conditions. (Table 5.4)

**Table 5.4 How would you rate your level of book reading?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
I read rarely.	17,7	22,0	28,5
I read occasionally	50,3	44,6	36,0
I read very frequently	30,3	22,6	11,0
I have no opinion	,3	6,2	15,0
Total	98,7	95,4	90,5
No Response	1,3	4,6	9,5
	100,0	100,0	100,0

15,8 percent of those who read occasionally and who read very frequently show the most interest in literature publications. In this category, intellectual-cultural publications rank second. In terms of reading habits and the types of books subjects read, intellectual and philosophy category ranks first in the Marmara Region with a ratio of 20 percent, literature ranks second with a ratio of 19.3 percent. In the Eastern Anatolia Region, in this grouping, literature publications rank first with 10.5 percent, intellectual - philosophy books rank second with 8.5 percent. (Table 5.5)

**Table 5.5 What kind of books do you read?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Intellect-philosophy	20,0	15,4	8,5
Politics	3,3	2,6	1,5
History	4,0	2,8	1,0
Research-Investigation	9,7	7,2	3,5
Literature	19,3	15,8	10,5
Art	2,0	1,8	1,5
Science-technology	,7	,8	1,0
Other	4,3	3,4	2,0
All of the above		1,0	2,5
Total	63,3	50,8	32,0
No Response	36,7	49,2	68,0
	100,0	100,0	100,0

### **2.3 The Social Level of Women**

To measure to what extent women take part in social life, we have asked the subjects if they participate in activities such as cinema, theater, exhibitions and similar activities. 34,4 percent of the subjects have replied that they rarely participate in these activities, 29,4 percent have replied that they participate once a month on the average, 17,5 percent have answered once a week on the average, 15,8 percent have stated that they participate once in a couple of month.

The replies we received in both regions clearly set forth the regional inequalities among women. While in the Marmara Region 20 percent of the subjects state that they rarely participate in such activities, in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio has been determined as 56 percent. The ratio of those stating that they

participate in such activities once a week on the average is 24.7 percent in the Marmara Region whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region, this ratio is 6 percent. The ratio of those saying that they participate in such activities once a month on the average is 39.7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 14 percent. The ratio of those saying that they participate in such activities once in a few months is 15.3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is determined as 16.5 percent. All these data show that the women in the Eastern Anatolia Region participate in social activities to a lesser extent in comparison with the women in Marmara Region. At this point, it is necessary to emphasize that the opportunity of access to social activities is increased in areas where there is higher rate of urbanization and the society is directed towards socialization through many means of communication. Differences may be observed in degrees of access to these opportunities within the city but these are not to the extent of impairing the general appearance brought about by urbanization. However, the fact that social activity opportunities are limited in the Eastern Anatolia Region which has not completed the process of urbanization is an important obstacle in the socialization of women in this region. On the other hand, in eastern areas where the traditional culture is prominent, participation of women in social activities can be prevented through oppression by the community. However, women living in city centers such as Istanbul and Bursa representing the Marmara Region in the survey have a more advantageous status. (Table 6.1)



**Table 6.1 Do you participate in activities such as cinema, theater, exhibition etc.?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
I almost do not participate	20,0	34,4	56,0
Once a week on the average	24,7	17,2	6,0
Once a month on the average	39,7	29,4	14,0
Once in a few months	15,3	15,8	16,5
Total	99,7	96,8	92,5
No Response	,3	3,2	7,5
	100,0	100,0	100,0

In Table 6.2, 41,6 percent of the subjects who were asked whether there is an institution in their vicinity organizing activities relevant to women, have answered no, 30,2 percent have answered yes and 27,4 percent have replied no opinion. It is found that the women are having difficulties in finding a mutual support medium where they can get together and carry out social activities or share their problems. The ratio of those stating that there is an institution performing activities relevant to women in their community is 38 percent in the Marmara Region and 18,5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The ratio of those indicating that there is no such institution is 41,7 percent in the Marmara Region and 41,5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The ratio of those stating that they have no opinion on this issue is 20 percent in the Marmara Region and 38,5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region.

Analysis based on these data show that in terms of not having an access to an institution with activities relevant to women where women can become organized, support each other, get help or socialize, the ratios in the Marmara Region and

Eastern Anatolia Region are very close to each other. On the other hand, the ratio of women indicating the existence of such an institution is higher in the Marmara Region in comparison with the Eastern Anatolia Region. This indicates that there is more of a deficiency in this regard in the Eastern Anatolia Region. Lack of socialization of women in this region is an important factor on the basis of this deficiency. On the other hand, the ratio of those who have no opinion on the existence of such an institution in their community is found to be higher in the Eastern Anatolia Region compared to the Marmara Region. This ratio being high in the Eastern Anatolia Region indicates that the women in this region are indifferent to activities concerning themselves. The absence of an environment that would help to form individual awareness is an important factor in the current situation. Traditional behavior patterns hinder the development of such an environment and the oppression imposed on women by these behavior patterns is at an undeniable level.

**Table 6.2 Is there an institution in your vicinity with activities relevant to women ?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	38,0	18,5	30,2
No	41,7	41,5	41,6
I have no opinion	20,0	38,5	27,4
Total	99,7	98,5	99,2
No Response	,3	1,5	,8
	100,0	100,0	100,0

## 2.4 The Level of Political Participation of Women

In this section, questions have been directed to subjects regarding women participating in politics and opinions of the families about women participating in politics. In Table 7.1, the ratio of those who do not have any membership to any political party, association or a similar non governmental organization has been measured as 8,4 percent. In the Marmara Region the ratio of those who have a membership in any political party, association or a similar non governmental organization is 15 percent, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region it is found to be 9,5 percent. These ratios are found to be low in both regions. The ratio of those who have no affiliation is 83 percent in the Marmara Region and 85,5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. According to these data, we see that the level of participation of women in social and political organizations is low in both regions. It is necessary to emphasize that the regional inequalities among women is decreased in this matter.

**Table 7.1 Do you have any affiliation to any political party, association or a similar non governmental organization?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	15,0	9,5	12,8
No	83,0	85,5	84,0
I have no opinion	1,7	4,0	2,6
Total	99,7	99,0	99,4
No Response	,3	1,0	,6
	100,0	100,0	100,0

In Table 7.2, the ratio of those who do not intend to participate in politics has been established as 77,6 percent. The ratio of those who intend to participate in politics is 17 percent in the Marmara Region whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region, this ratio is 15 percent. The ratio of those who are not considering entering into politics is 79,3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 75 percent.

**Table 7.2 Would you consider participating in politics?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	17,0	15,0	12,8
No	79,3	75,0	84,0
I have no opinion	3,6	9,0	2,6
Total	100,0	99,0	99,4
No Response		1,0	,6
		100,0	100,0

The ratio of subjects stating that their families support participation of women in politics is 53,2 percent. The ratio of those stating that their family support the idea of women participating in politics is 63,3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 38 percent. The ratio of those stating that their family is against women being in politics is 14 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 26 percent. The ratio of those stating that they have no opinion on this matter is 22,2 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 35,5 percent. (Table 7.3)

As shown in table 7.2, while the ratio of women's willingness to participate in politics is low in the Marmara Region, contrastingly the ratio of those stating that their family has a positive approach to this issue is found to be high. In the Eastern Anatolia Region the ratio of those not willing to enter in politics is found to be high. But the family support being low is an important factor in this result. Another important finding is that the women have no idea about what their families' views on this matter. This ratio is found to be higher in the Eastern Anatolia Region compared to the Marmara Region. At this point, it is necessary to take into consideration that the chance of women accessing political activities is lower in eastern areas. Also, in eastern areas where the patriarchal order has intensively penetrated every aspect of the society, it is not an acceptable case for women to have authority outside the house. Especially in the political arena that is under the dominance of men, women are having difficulties in overcoming the social judgements and this situation is limiting their participation in the political arena. It is obvious that this social judgement is impelling families to think negatively on the issue of women's participation in politics. On the other hand, the traditional roles imposed on women are hindering them in having authority in the political arena.

**Table 7.3 What does your family think about women participation in politics?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
They support it	63,3	38,0	53,2
They are against it	14,0	26,0	19,0
I have no opinion	22,7	35,5	27,6
Total	100,0	99,5	99,8
No Response		,5	,2
		100,0	100,0

When asked the reason why there are only a small number of women in politics, 33,2 percent of the subjects have stated that no opportunities are given to women in politics, 18,8 percent have answered that they can not get support from their families/community, 17,2 percent have pointed to responsibilities such as house work and care of children, 11,4 percent have replied that they find themselves inadequate for politics. (Table 7.4)

In table 7.4 where we have investigated the difficulties encountered by women and the reasons why the number of women participating in politics is low, the comparison of data from both regions shows that the ratio of replies is close to each other. The ratio of those stating that no opportunities are given to women in politics is 36,3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 28,5 percent. The ratio of those stating that there is only a small number women in politics because they are not supported by their families and their community is 21 percent in the in the Eastern Anatolia Region, whereas in the Marmara Region this ratio is 17,3 percent. The ratio of those stating that there is a small number of women in politics because of their responsibilities such as housework and care of children is 14 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 22 percent. This ratio being high in the Eastern Anatolia Region is natural when considering that the women in the rural areas are living in the existence of a system that has been molded with traditional patterns. It is necessary to emphasize that the lack of education is an important factor in the occurrence of this situation. In this table, the ratio of women saying that they view themselves as inadequate for politics is 12,7 percent in the Marmara Region and this

ratio is found to be 9,5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The reason for this ratio to be higher in the Marmara Region representing a higher socio-economic income level and numerous opportunities, can be explained by the fact that women are not courageous enough to participate in the political arena. On the other hand, it is quite natural for women in the East where there is no access for them to relevant to necessary social and cultural opportunities, to view themselves as inadequate for politics.

**Table 7.4 In your opinion, what is the reason for having only a small number of women in politics?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Women do not want to participate in politics	6,0	8,0	6,8
No opportunities are given to women in politics	36,3	28,5	33,2
They can not get support from their families/community	17,3	21,0	18,8
Due to responsibilities such as house work and care of children	14,0	22,0	17,2
Economical insufficiency	10,7	7,5	9,4
They find themselves to be inadequate for politics	12,7	9,5	11,4
Other	2,0	1,0	1,6
All of the above		1,0	,4
Total	99,0	98,5	98,8
No Response	1,0	1,5	1,2
	100,0	100,0	100,0

## 2.5 Family Life

In Table 8.1, when we asked the subjects whether they have children or not, it has been found that in general there is a fall in the number of children. The number of children that the women in the Marmara Region have is lower compared to women in the Eastern Anatolia Region.

**Table 8.1 Do you have children?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
No	47,0	24,5	38,0
1	17,7	9,0	14,2
2	18,0	24,5	20,6
3	11,0	13,0	11,8
4	4,0	8,0	5,6
5	1,3	6,0	3,2
6	,7	4,0	2,0
7	,3	2,0	,8
8		4,5	1,8
9	,3	2,5	1,2
10		1,5	,6
11		,5	,2
Total	100,0	100,0	100,0

From the answers we have received to another question we have asked in connection with this question, it is seen that 93 percent of the women accentuate birth control. This indicates that the women are more conscious about healthy birth and having children. The ratio of women who emphasize birth control is 96 percent in the Marmara Region and this ratio is 88 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The ratio of those who emphasize birth control turning out to be high in both regions



is an indication of increased consciousness of women about birth control. On the other hand, the ratios are found to be lower in the Eastern Anatolia Region compared with Marmara and the ratio of women giving no importance to birth control is found to be 5,5 percent. The fact that the ratios found in this respect are so different, is an indication of the necessity to improve birth control in rural areas. Still these ratios may be considered as positive for the Eastern Anatolia Region. (Table 8.2)

**Table 8.2 Do you give importance to birth control?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	96,0	88,0	93,0
No	1,0	5,5	2,8
I have no opinion	2,0	6,0	3,0
Total	99,0	,5	98,8
No Response	1,0	98,5	1,2
	100,0	100,0	100,0

In Table 8.3, 82.4 percent of the subjects have not been subjected to violence within the family. The ratio of those that have been subjected to violence in the family is 15 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas this ratio is 14 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. While the ratio of those not subjected to violence in the family is 82,3 percent in the Marmara Region, it is 82,5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The fact that the ratio of women who have not been subjected to violence is high in both the urban and rural areas comes out to be an improvement. While it is possible to talk about the presence of women who have been subjected to violence in the family, albeit they are in the minority. The difference between East

Anatolia region and Marmara Region being minimal in this regard indicates that violence within the family is not a local problem but a general one.

**Table 8.3 Have you been subjected to violence within the family?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	15,0	14,0	14,6
No	82,3	82,5	82,4
I have no opinion	1,0	1,5	1,2
Total	98,3	98,0	98,2
No Response	1,7	2,0	1,8
	100,0	100,0	100,0

In Table 8.4, it is seen that 97.2 of the subjects support the view that the government should open shelter homes for women that are subjected to violence. This ratio shows that the women are in solidarity against violence. The ratio of subjects supporting that the establishment of shelters by the government for women subjected to violence is 99,3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas this ratio is 94 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. This ratio indicates that women in both regions are sensitive about this issue. Although the ratio of those that are subjected to violence in the family which is shown as low in table 8.3, the ratio of those that support the view that the government should open shelter homes for women that are subjected to violence is shown as high in table 8.4. This finding supports the results of researches that specify that there is a percentage of women who do not express their experiences as being subjected to violence. These researches point out that it is necessary to consider the issue of women' being subjected to violence as a general

social problem without making any classifications of women in terms of regional characteristics.

**Table 8.4 What is your opinion about the government opening up shelter homes for women subjected to violence?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
I support it	99,3	94,0	97,2
I am against it		1,5	,6
I have no opinion	,7	1,5	1,0
Total	100,0	97,0	98,8
No Response		3,0	1,2
		100,0	100,0

In Tablo 8.5, the ratio of those who are against marrying off women at a very young age is 89,8 percent. Women do not approve of this practice brought upon by traditional principles. The ratio of subjects that are against marrying off women at a young age is 95,7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is found to be 81 percent. The ratio of subjects considering marriage at a young age as normal is 3,3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 11,5 percent. This higher ratio in the Eastern Anatolia Region indicates that marrying off women at a young age is a widespread practice in rural areas. The traditional rules of the society play a significant role in this situation. Besides this, it can be stated that marriages at a young age are not acceptable among women with a higher economical and social status in the Marmara region where urbanization is effective.

**Table 8.5 What is your view on marrying off women at a young age?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Normal	3,3	11,5	6,6
I am against it	95,7	81,0	89,8
I have no opinion	1,0	7,5	3,4
Total	100,0	100,0	,2
			100,0

In Table 8.6, the awareness of women about the amendments in Turkish Civil Law that arranges family has been measured and the ratio of those who answered yes was 49,4 percent and the ratio of those who answered no was 38.6 percent. The ratio of those who are follow up the amendments in the Turkish Civil Law is 56,7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 38,5 percent. It is possible to say that social principles and insufficiency of education plays a significant role in this ratio being low in the east. The ratio of those who do not follow up the amendments in the Turkish Civil Law is 33,7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 46 percent. The ratio being high in the East is due to the fact that the traditional values molding the life style of women is making it difficult for women to take the legal regulations into consideration.

**Table 8.6 Do you follow up the amendments in Turkish Civil Law?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	56,7	38,5	49,4
No	33,7	46,0	38,6
I have no opinion	9,0	13,5	10,8
Total	99,3	98,0	98,8
No Response	,7	2,0	1,2
	100,0	100,0	100,0

In Table 8.7, the ratio of the subjects stating that in case of divorce, their decision will not be changed inspite the influence of their milieu is found to be 6 percent. 14.2 percent have answered yes to this question. It is obvious that women exhibit a more individual conduct while making the divorce decision. The ratio of those stating that if they have to get a divorce one day, they would change their mind under the reaction from their community, is 11,7 percent in the Marmara Region and 18 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The fact that the ratio of those who have answered yes to this question is considerably high indicates that the oppression imposed by the society. The fact that this ratio is high in the Eastern Anatolia Region points out that the social traditions are protected more compared to the western regions. Those who have replied no to this question is 78 percent in the Marmara Region and 49,5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. This shows that the women in the Marmara region can make their individual decisions more so than the women in the Eastern Anatolia region. The sufficient situation in Marmara region in terms of educational, social and business opportunities have a greater effect in individual behaviors of women in this area.

**Table 8.7 In case of divorce, would you change your mind under reactions from your community?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	11,7	18,0	14,2
No	78,0	49,5	66,6
I have no opinion	9,3	31,0	18,0
Total	99,0	98,5	98,8
No Response	1,0	1,5	1,2
	100,0	100,0	100,0

In Table 8.8, the most important difficulty women encounter when making the decision to divorce has been identified as financial difficulties by 33.4 percent of the subjects, the physical and psychological status of children by 22 percent and oppression from the community by 19 percent. In light of this data, it is observed that women are strained in making the decision to get a divorce considering the economic difficulties they will be facing after divorce. Another matter expressed on this topic is the status of children. Women think that the children will be affected by divorce both physically and psychologically. The reaction and pressure of the community when making the decision to divorce are leaving them in a difficult situation.

Of the points mentioned as the most significant difficulty faced by women when making the decision to divorce, financial difficulties mentioned as first in the Marmara Region with a ratio of 47,2 percent and the status of children expressed as first in the Eastern Anatolia Region with a ratio of 27 percent. Oppression from the society ranks second in the Marmara Region with a ratio of 23,7 percent and financial difficulties rank second in the Eastern Anatolia Region with a ratio of 22,5

percent. It is striking that the top two difficulties are financial difficulties and oppression by the society in the highly urbanized Marmara Region. This shows that women even in the cities where they have broader opportunities encounter financial difficulties and that they have not been able to completely liberate themselves from the oppression of the society. At this point, the fact that the ratio of women at work is relatively lower than men is a significant indication.

**Table 8.8 In your opinion what is the most important difficulty encountered by women when making the decision to divorce?**

	Marmara Region		East Anatolia Region		General
Pressure from the Community	23,7	Pressure from the Community	12,0	Pressure from the Community	19,0
Economical difficulties	40,7	Economical difficulties	22,5	Economical difficulties	33,4
Status of children	18,7	Status of children	27,0	Status of children	22,0
Violence	3,3	Incompatibility	6,5	Custom/Tradition	5,0
Pressure from the family	3,3	Violence	7,0	Violence	4,8
Getting no support	1,0	Pressure from the family	6,0	Pressure from the family	4,4
Other	4,6	Other	14,0	Other	6,6
Total	95,3	Total	95,0	Total	95,2
No Response	4,7	No Response	5,0	No Response	4,8
	100,0		100,0		100,0

When we asked the reason for divorce to divorced women, 2,6 percent of the subjects have stated that they have been subjected to violence, 1,6 percent have answered extreme incompatibility and 1,2 percent have answered conflict of

opinions. Among divorced women, those that state their ground for divorce as extreme incompatibility is 2 percent in the Marmara Region. In the Eastern Anatolia Region, conflict of opinions is mentioned as ground for divorce with a 5 percent ratio. The appearance of the issue of violence as an important factor of divorce points out that the strong control mechanisms of traditional structure cause physical and emotional damages on women. (Table 8.9)

**Table 8.9 What is your reason for divorce?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region		General
Extreme Incompatibility	2,0	1,0	Extreme incompatibility	16
Conflict of opinions	1,0	1,5	Violence	2,6
Other	3,3	1,5	Conflict of opinions	1,2
Total	6,3	4,0	Total	5,4
No Response	93,7	96,0	No Response	94,6
	100,0	100,0		100,0

## 2.6 The Level of Participation to Business Life

In Table 9.1, we have asked women who do not work the reason for it. 11,8 percent of the subjects have stated their responsibilities such as housework and children, 7,4 percent have indicated that their husbands do not want them to work, 6,8 percent have said that their education was insufficient, 6,6 percent have said that they could not find a job. These data show that the woman's role as mother and housewife hinders the woman in starting to work and in a way show that the



traditional roles of woman are still continuing in the division of labor within the family. The subjects that have indicated they were not able to get sufficient education to enter business life refer to the lack of education.

7,7 percent of the subjects mentioned that their husbands do not want them to work and in the Eastern Anatolia Region 22 percent have indicated that they do not work due to their responsibilities such as house work and care of children. It is observed in the Eastern Anatolia Region that the traditional roles based on sex constitute a significant obstacle for women's participation in business and social life. By imposing the roles of housewife and mother on the women, their participation in social life is being handicapped. At the same time, it is necessary to take into consideration the fact that people are engaged in farming in eastern regions, education is insufficient and job opportunities are very limited and these are other factors that prevent women from participating in work life. We can deduct this from the fact that the ratio of women indicating childcare and house work as a reason for not working is 5 percent in the Marmara Region which is more developed. The ratio of those who have stated that they do not want to work is 7,7 percent in the Marmara Region and this ratio is 7 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The ratio of women stating that their education is inadequate for working is 4,7 percent in the Marmara Region and this ratio is 10 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. These ratios indicates the lack of education in the East as well as the fact that women will be participating more effectively in public life as this deficiency in education is eliminated.

**Table 9.1 What is your reason for not working?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
My husband does not want me to work.	7,7	16,5	11,2
I can't work due to my responsibilities such as housework/children care	5,0	22,0	11,8
My family is against it	,3	5,0	2,2
I do not have sufficient education	4,7	10,0	6,8
I do not want to work	7,7	7,0	7,4
I can not find a job	5,7	8,0	6,6
Other	2,3	1,5	2,0
All of the above		,5	,2
Total	33,3	70,5	48,2
No Response	66,7	29,5	51,8
	100,0	100,0	100,0

18,8 percent of working women have mentioned inequality in wages, 9,6 percent have mentioned harassment, 5,4 percent have indicated lack of day-care center as problems encountered in work life. Inequality in wages has been indicated as the most important problem of women in working life. We can say that the inequality is directly related to considering women as having secondary status within the society. Harassment appears to be another important problem. This is an indication that the women do not receive respect in the business environment and that in a way the woman is still being considered a sexual object. Lack of day care center causes difficulties to women in terms of care of their children. In table 9.2 where working women have listed the problems they have encountered in work life, inequality of wages that has been expressed with the highest ratio in both regions is 25,3 percent in the Marmara Region and 9 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The ratio of women indicating harassment as a problem is 13 percent in the Marmara

Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 4,5 percent. Harassment encountered as a social problem in the Marmara Region whereas this ratio being lower in the Eastern Anatolia Region indicate that the traditional values are prominent and these values are quite effective in determining the behavioral patterns in eastern areas. In the cosmopolitan structure brought about by urbanization, people from different cultures are gathered together and as a result, the traditional values are insufficient in protecting the privacy in these regions and that it creates its own values. The harassment problem encountered by women at the work place can be interpreted as the result of impairment of privacy. In this respect, having a negative opinion about women working is in a way a result of the concerns about impairment of women's privacy.

**Table 9.2 What are the problem you are encountering in your work life?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Harassment	13,0	4,5	9,6
Inequality of wages	25,3	9,0	18,8
Lack of day-care centers	5,3	5,5	5,4
Other	6,0	4,5	5,4
All of the above		,5	,2
Total	49,7	24,0	39,4
No Response	50,3	76,0	60,6
	100,0	100,0	100,0

In Table 9.3, it is seen that 62.4 percent of the subjects have social security whereas 33.4 percent have no such security. The ratio of those stating that they have social security is 63,7 in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 60,5 percent. The ratio of those stating that they do not have

social security is 33,7 in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is found to be 30 percent. The similarity of the ratios of women that have social security indicates that improvement has been achieved in this matter in the eastern regions.

**Table 9.3 Do you have social security?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	63,7	60,5	62,4
No	33,7	33,0	33,4
I have no opinion	,7	4,0	2,0
Total	98,0	97,5	97,8
No response	2,0	2,5	2,2
	100,0	100,0	100,0

While 31 percent of married women are supported by from their husbands on their decision to work, 19.8 percent have stated that they are not supported by their husbands. The ratio of women stating that they receive no support from their husbands for working is 13 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 30 percent. This ratio being high in the East Anatolia Region is an outcome of the social structure. In these regions where the society has a negative opinion on women getting outside of the private sphere, men who strongly protect traditional values do not support their wives to enter in work life. On the other hand the ratio of women stating that their husbands supports them to enter work life is 37,7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 28,5 percent. (Table 9.4)

**Table 9.4 Does your husband support you on your decision to work?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Yes	32,7	28,5	31,0
No	13,0	30,0	19,8
I have no opinion	2,0	7,0	4,0
Total	47,7	65,5	54,8
No response	52,3	34,5	45,2
	100,0	100,0	100,0

While the ratio of working women whose families have a positive opinion on women working is 71.6 percent, the ratio of those whose families have a negative point of view on this issue is 23.6 percent. The ratio of women stating that their families have a positive opinion of women working is 83,7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 53,5 percent. In the East Anatolia Region, the low ratio on this item can be explained by the negative approach of traditional norms to the work of women. It is an expected finding that the families support the women to work in the Marmara Region. It is natural that the social consciousness have developed in this way in these regions where participation in work life is high. Besides, in the Marmara region the economic conditions put a lot of strain on making a living, therefore participation of women in work life is being supported. (Table 9.5)

**Table 9.5 What is your family's opinion on working women?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Positive	83,7	53,5	71,6
Negative	15,3	36,0	23,6
I have no opinion	,7	7,0	3,2
Total	99,7	96,5	98,4
No response	,3	3,5	1,6
	100,0	100,0	100,0

## **2.7 The Level of Health Service**

In Table 10.1, 38 percent of the subjects have stated that they think the level of health services in their region is insufficient, 35.4 percent have rated it as medium, 18.4 percent have rated it as sufficient and 6.8 percent have stated that they never use these services. The ratio of women stating that they benefit sufficiently from the health services in their region is 21,7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 14,5 percent. The ratio of women stating that they benefit at a medium level from the health services is 36,7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 33,5 percent. The ratio of women stating that the health services are insufficient is 34,3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 43,5 percent. The fact that health services are rated as insufficient in the East indicates that health services are not adequately widespread, that there is a lack of health personnel and that the women with social security are in the minority. However, the fact that the ratio of those who rate health services in the Marmara Region as insufficient is at a level that can not be underestimated, indicates that health services

are unsatisfactory for women in western region too. On the other hand, the ratio of women who rate health services as sufficient and medium is higher in the Marmara Region compared to the Eastern Anatolia Region. This shows that there is a general problem regarding health issue in the eastern regions.

**Table 10.1 To what extent do you benefit from the health services in your region?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Sufficient	21,7	14,5	18,8
Medium	36,7	33,5	35,4
Insufficient	34,3	43,5	38,0
I never use these services	6,3	7,5	6,8
Total	99,0	99,0	99,0
No Response	1,0	1,0	1,0
	100,0	100,0	100,0

59 percent of the subjects have stated that they use state or SSK hospitals for their health needs, 24 percent have stated that they use private hospitals and polyclinics and 12.6 percent have stated that they use village clinics. The ratio of women meeting their health needs in village clinics is 8,3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas this ratio is 19 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The ratio of women preferring State or SSK hospitals is 57,7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas this ratio is 62,5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The fact that the use of village clinics is higher in the East as compared to Marmara region indicates that these are the institutions which provide widespread health services in eastern region. Economical conditions and difficulties in transportation can be listed as other factors. The ratio of women using private hospitals and private polyclinics is 32,7

percent in the Marmara Region, whereas this ratio is 11 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. In the East Anatolia Region the low ratio shows that there are insufficient private health associations and women generally do not have necessary economic power to use them. (Table 10.2)

**Table 10.2 Where do you generally meet your health needs?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Village clinics	8,3	19,0	12,6
State or SSK hospitals	57,7	62,5	59,6
Private hospitals and polyclinics	32,7	11,0	24,0
Other		1,5	,6
I have no opinion	1,3	5,0	2,8
Total	100,0	99,0	99,6
No Response		1,0	,4
		100,0	100,0

63.8 percent of the subjects think that the government's work on women's health is insufficient, while 22.9 percent rate it as medium and 3,8 percent rate it as sufficient. In Table 10.3, the ratio of those who rate the government's policy pertaining to women's health as insufficient is 71 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas this ratio is 83 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The ratio of those who rate the government's policy pertaining to women's health as medium is 18 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas this ratio is 28 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region. The government's policy pertaining to women's health has been assessed as insufficient in both regions. Great majority of the subjects assess the government's activities on women's health are unsatisfactory. Women who largely



meet their health needs from state and SSK hospitals have emphasized that these institutions are inadequate in resolving health problems. (Table 10.3)

**Table 10.3 How do you rate the government's policy on women's health issue?**

	Marmara Region	East Anatolia Region	General
Sufficient	3,0	5,0	3,8
Medium	18,0	28,0	22,0
Insufficient	71,0	53,0	63,8
I have no opinion	7,0	13,0	9,4
Total	99,0	99,0	99,0
No Response	1,0	1,0	1,0
	100,0	100,0	100,0

## 2.8 General Approach to Women's Rights

In order to assess the point of view of women on their own problems and the suggestions they make for solutions, two general interpretations are prepared and included in the final section of the survey.

In the first question, subjects have been asked to state what they think is the major problem of women in Turkey. In Table 11.1, the answers to this question display a wide range of distribution. It will be appropriate to refer to the matters that are ranked in top three based on the answers to this question and that are on Turkey's agenda in terms of women's problems. 24 percent of the subjects have pointed to the deprivation of women from education, 18 percent have stated inequality between men and women, 14.2 percent have stated financial insufficiency as the most

important problems of women. It is obvious from this ranking that despite the reforms and arrangements made throughout history, deprivation of women from education continues to be the most important problem for women in Turkey. Women deprived of education view this situation as the source of many of problems. At this point, it is meaningful that the inequality between men and women rank as the second important problem. The fact that equality between men and women in the society and in family life causes the woman to be financially dependent.

Among the replies to this question financial insufficiency has the highest rate in the Marmara Region with a ratio of 18,7 percent. In the Eastern Anatolia Region deprivation of education has been stated as the primary problem with a ratio of 33,5 percent. In the Marmara Region 17,7 percent of the subjects have stated that women are deprived of education.

The ratio of women indicating inequality between men and women and women having secondary status as a problem is 13,3 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas this ratio is 17 percent Eastern Anatolia Region. The fact that this ratio is relatively higher in the Marmara region indicates that the inequality between men and women legitimized by social oppression is more dominant in these areas. The ratio of those stating financial insufficiency among women's problems is 18,7 percent in the Marmara Region, whereas it is 7,5 percent in the Eastern Anatolia Region.

It should be emphasized that the economic conditions in the lifestyle brought about by urbanization bring up difficulties for women. Majority of working women have to work under difficult and unequal conditions. Since living in the city necessitates financial sufficiency, when women are having difficulties in meeting this or in cases where they are not allowed to work, they become economically dependent on others. This dependency which is described as financial insufficiency is the origin of many problems for women in terms of circumstances brought about by urbanization. Although majority of women influenced by social values are having difficulties in acting on their own, the fact that women have not reached a sufficient economic level plays an important role in shaping this situation.

In the eastern region, the primary problem is lack of education. Women that are not able to access educational opportunities have less of a chance to benefit from job opportunities. On the other hand, when taking into consideration that one of the main reasons why women cannot benefit from educational opportunities is traditional principles, we observe that the situation is creating a system which supports the economic dependency of women. It is possible to say that the emphasis on lack of education by women in the eastern area who feel the weight of the patriarchal system intensively in every aspect of their lives is resulting from their belief in that the education will bring about a social transformation.

**Table 11.1 In your opinion what is the greatest problem of women in Turkey?**

	Marmara Region		East Anatolia Region		General
Inequality between men and women/women being in secondary status	13,3	Inequality between men and women/women being in secondary status	17,0	Inequality between men and women/women being in secondary status	18,0
Financial insufficiency	18,7	Financial insufficiency	7,5	Financial insufficiency	14,2
Deprivation of education	17,7	Deprivation of education	33,5	Deprivation of education	24,0
Being subject to harassment and violence	8,3	Being subject to harassment and violence	8,0	Unemployment	2,4
Gaining freedom	4,0	Unemployment	4,5	Gaining freedom	3,0
Being oppressed by men in the society	2,7	Being oppressed by men in the society	4,0	Being subject to harassment and violence	8,2
Other	32	Other	19	Other	25,6
Total	96,7	Total	93,5	Total	95,4
No Response	3,3	No Response	6,5	No Response	4,6
	100,0		100,0		100,0

Secondly, we asked the subjects to indicate the most important regulation regarding women that needs to be established in Turkey. 32 percent of the subjects have stated that it is necessary to increase education opportunities, 11,4 percent have mentioned achieving equality between men and women, 7.6 percent have stated providing job opportunities, 4.2 percent have stated establishing the necessary regulations regarding women's rights, 3 percent have stated increasing women's awareness regarding women's rights, as the necessary actions to be taken. In these answers, the statements ranking in top three are characterized as being solutions for

the problems indicated in Table 11.1. Also, the need to increase awareness of women's rights and increasing women's awareness regarding their own rights has also been emphasized although to a lesser extent.

Among the replies given to the second of general assessment questions, which is asking what is the most important regulation regarding women that needs to be established, in both regions the highest ratio was in increasing the educational opportunities. The ratio of women giving this reply in the Marmara Region is 29,7 percent, whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region, this ratio is 35,5 percent. The fact that the women in the Marmara Region have mentioned this issue at a high rate may be interpreted that they think their most important problem, namely, financial insufficiency is resulting from lack of education. On the other hand, it is a natural approach that in the Eastern Anatolia Region, where deprivation from education is indicated as the most important problem of women, increasing educational opportunities and making them widespread is suggested as a solution.

The ratio of women stating that the equality between men and women should be achieved is 9,7 percent in the Marmara Region whereas in the Eastern Anatolia Region this ratio is 14 percent. Similar to the education issue, in the Marmara region where the inequality between men and women is established systematically it is an expected outcome that equality is demanded to end the unjust treatment of women in every aspect. As the result of first assessment, in the Marmara Region, financial insufficiency was stated as the most significant problem and in line with that in

suggestions for solutions the ratio of women indicating that job opportunities should be created is higher in this region.

In Marmara region 4,3 percent of the subjects stated the necessity of increasing the awareness of women regarding their rights. This situation points out the existence of women who believe that the realization of social transformation can be ensured if women internalize their rights.

In the East Anatolia Region, 5,5 percent of the subjects offered that regulations should be established regarding women's rights. This finding emphasizes which women who live under the control of the traditional values in East Anatolia Region demand to have rights which improve their social status. In these regions where reforms relevant to women's rights that regulated the process of social integration since the foundation of Republic regime could not be penetrated and expanded, women emphasize the unavailable position of legal regulations in front of patriarchal order. This kind of demand of women in East Anatolia Region points out the regional inequalities among women. (Table 11.2)

**Table 11.2 In your opinion what should be the most important regulation that needs to be established in Turkey?**

	Marmara Region		East Anatolia Region		General
Education opportunities should be increased	29,7	Education opportunities should be increased	35,5	Education opportunities should be increased	32,0
Achieving equality between men and women	9,7	Achieving equality between men and women	14,0	Providing job opportunities	7,6
Providing job opportunities	9,0	Providing job opportunities	5,5	Social security	3,0
Increasing the awareness of women regarding their rights	4,3	Providing legal and social equality	2,5	Achieving equality between men and women	11,4
Social security	4,0	They should be allowed to defend their rights	3,0	Regulations should be established regarding women's rights	4,2
Providing freedom	3,7	Regulations should be established regarding women's rights	5,5	Increasing the awareness of women regarding their rights	3,0
Regulations should be established regarding women's rights	3,3	Representation of women in national assembly	2,5		
Other	29,3	Other	29,0	Other	30,4
Total	93,0	Total	89,5	Total	91,6
No Response	7,0	No Response	10,5	No Response	8,4
	100,0		100,0		100,0

## **2.9 Findings of the Survey**

According to the results of the field study made in selected cities in the Marmara Region and Eastern Anatolia Region, the regional inequalities among women are prominent in the matter of education. In the Marmara region which has the highest socio-economic income level, the fact that the participation of women in work life and getting support from their husbands and families in this regard is higher compared to the East Anatolia region which has the lowest socio-economic income level, enables the evaluation of the differences in private and public areas of life in light of differences between regions. As shown by the data indicating that the women in eastern region are more confined to the private areas of life compared with western women and also the control of traditional behavioral patterns on the women in these areas are continuing effectively. As long as this situation continues, it does not seem possible for the regional inequalities among women to be eliminated and the inequality widespread in the country to be transformed. Therefore, it is necessary for especially women in the eastern region to be supported more and to put in effect regulations that will serve the formation of social transformation which will overcome the traditional prejudices.

Since the reforms made throughout history for improving the status of the Turkish woman have not been spread all over the country and these innovations have not been assimilated by the women in eastern region where social values dominate, this has resulted in these women being in a position to reproduce the patriarchal



order. In this system, women who have been confined to the private area under social oppression have access to the opportunity to break the traditional walls built around her as a result of development in social, economical and legal spheres; however the women in eastern areas do not have this opportunity.

The findings of the survey results supporting the regional inequalities among women with respect to education, social activities, participation in social activities, work life, family life issues, confirm these points. The data obtained throughout this study needs to be considered as an indication of the fact that since the period of the Republic the regulations established pertaining to women have not been sufficient to eliminate regional inequality and in this respect these reforms were not successful in penetrating into the lives molded by traditional values. Since the reforms regarding women have been insufficient in changing the social mentality, this situation has been effective in causing the dominant traditional values to become deeply rooted.

In the current system, it is a fact that the country-wide social activities such as campaigns and projects especially addressed at eastern region and aiming to create a social consciousness about the education of women serve the establishment of a social mentality transformation albeit gradually. As a result of accelerating these activities and broadening their scope, it would be possible to achieve a fundamental social transformation that will lay the foundation to eliminate the regional inequalities among women.

## **Chapter III**

### **GENERAL OVERLOOK TO WOMEN QUESTION IN RESPECT TO REGIONAL INEQUALITIES**

Turkish women movement that began with the Tanzimat Fermanı in the late times of Ottoman Empire and accelerated by the Second Constitutional Period and shaped by the roles of good wife and mother under the ideal of Westernization has exhibited a dynamic appearance in its declarations and activities. Although this women movement struggled to be effective in political and social arena after proclamation of Republic, it was impossible to achieve its ends in those times when government was thoroughly devoted to a unitary state model.

Despite all those reforms movements that aimed to restructure family life and social life of Ottoman, the fact that the aimed social restructuring could not reach beyond the boundaries of large cities and city centers is noteworthy.

The effects of reform movements that illustrates the examples of westernization in administrative and civil structure of the Ottoman in the period following declaration of Tanzimat has been felt in large city centers of the Empire, such as Istanbul and Thessalonica. Modernization movements that included a limited portion of the Empire could not spread all over the nation. During the Tanzimat era, aside from the fact that major initiatives were made with reform movements, a tendency that notes the religion and beliefs of Ottoman society is

evident. At this point, traditional principles which are legitimized in the religious basis brought about the visibility of regional inequalities among women.

After the declaration of Tanzimat, although there had been realized certain reform movements, such as granting right to official education to women in Ottoman, Ottoman women's entering in business life, and provision of regulations improving women's position on inheritance, concubine institution and marriage; there hadn't been much progress in this issue as women question had been content with a debate topic that was mostly brought in articles of intellectuals. In this era, the fact that reforms made on women question which had its share of change in Ottoman's administrative level and social structure had been realized with the government intervention, like any other reform had been in this period, indicates that the women used as a symbol in westernization ideal. A basis for the presence of Ottoman women consciousness that developed level by level as a result of getting stronger enough to express their rights and demands of the women, who had been included in publication and mass media as a giant step forward made possible by education opportunity, one of major changes brought about by Tanzimat. The symbolic meaning of women in the concept of Westernization prevented the internalization of reforms relevant to women. This situation causes the reproduction of regional inequalities among women during the historical process.

As a result of the emphasis put by the Republican regime on woman's status as a touchstone of modernization, reforms relevant to women in Turkey have brought up distinctive novelties in social, political and legal and public arena. Incorporation

of women's social and political women rights in the narration of Turkish women's movement in the early period of these reforms contributed to the process a lot, too. However, the effects of this contribution have diminished after the acquisition of women's rights in political field. Decreasing emphasis on women's rights due to the conviction that women have acquired social and political rights played an important role in this situation. Another important factor is that women did not internalize the arrangements in women's rights which were top down enforced as a result of women' being described as the Republican revolution. In this context, Turkish women's movement was in a standstill period especially after 1950's multiparty period and it did not make progress up to 1980s.

In 1980s, Turkey witnessed to awakening of women's movement and the formation of an independent declaration. Women went into search of an independent identity in sense of this declaration. At this point, they served to form a public atmosphere in which problems of women were discussed thoroughly. Turkish women's movement developed an independent and powerful organizing structure and tended to institutionalism in the years in which women question was taken into agenda effectively. As a result of this, women came together in centers, in which they could discuss their own problems, produce solutions to them and be in solidarity and define women question. Turkish women's rights declaration took the problems of women such as harassment, violence in family that they experienced in the background into the agenda and demanded the execution of legitimate regulations about this subject intensively. The attitude of women's movement that argues on

positions of women in patriarchal system forced government to realize developments about women.

It is interesting that the number of women who has affect in political mechanisms in this period was lower than the number of women in Turkish Grand National Assembly in the first years of Republic in spite of a woman movement emerged with an independent identity. Although the reflection of political rights of women into Turkish Grand National Assembly, which are granted in order to remove a deficiency of democratic appearance in the unitary structure of state in Republic era was affirmative at first, but no significant progress has been achieved in this context till today. In 1980s, it is seen that women prefer to take a part in women divisions of political parties rather than taking part in political mechanisms.

The decrease in the number of women effective in political area in 1980s, through which feminist awakening was effective, and in 1990s continues today. Women's, who are working in political parties, not maintaining solidarity is amongst themselves a significant factor in this decrease. At this point, it is needed that feminist movement to struggle more in order to maintain democratic system in society by utilizing women's rights declaration more effectively against values of patriarchal system. In this context, women movement, which may contribute the improvement of democracy, will take a significant step towards the establishment of social transformation.

Traditional roles of woman as housewife and motherhood based on sexuality, which is brought up by patriarchal system, affect the standing of women in public sphere negatively. As the result of my survey pointed out, social constraint underlies all difficulties that women meet in every field throughout the country. A significant decrease is recorded in social and cultural levels of women especially in eastern region, who are forced to lead a life shaped by traditional prejudices.

Although some recent studies carried out to improve the cultural levels of women in eastern regions brought affirmative results, they couldn't be effective as to transform the traditional values. Likewise, results of survey in which discrimination in socio-cultural field between women from Marmara region and East Anatolia region can be viewed easily indicate that a complete transformation relevant to women's rights in social mentality can't be obtained. In spite of social constraint that is effective in Marmara region which has the highest socio-economic income level, women maintain raising their cultural levels as a result of vast possibilities that they had in education and socialization fields, they preserve their legal rights and they had more advantage in participating labor life than women in East Anatolia region which has the lowest socio-economical income level. The most significant factor for women who live in Marmara overcoming social mentality is before all else, being educated and then entering in labor life. But in the East Anatolia region, women's being deprived of chance of education and government's being ineffective about this problem supports the patriarchal system in these regions and this situation causes regional inequalities among women. The way to eradicate this problem is to

make society conscious of women's rights by taking this inequality into consideration and executing egalitarian regulations in education and labor life.

Bringing codes based on equality of women is a very difficult process in regions that traditional prejudices dominate. In this context, we observe that reforms carried out in the Republican period couldn't eradicate the regional inequality between women up today. This shows that regulations that hadn't be internalized by society couldn't progress towards the way they are aimed to. Recent amendments aiming to achieve equality between men and women in Turkish Civil Law and stress on government's responsibility for these amendments are important steps towards acquisition of women's rights. The extent of success in this arrangement in life will be assessed by acceptance the arrangements in social sphere. At this point, it is seen that women meet difficulties in revealing their own values under the domination of patriarchal system. Women's taking part in political field will be a significant step in improving the positions of women around the women question and fertilizing social structure including women declaration.

Carrying women question and proposals for solutions into Grant National Assembly in women's point of view is very important for obtaining a throughout improvement in women's positions in every field. But it is so difficult to realize this in a patriarchal politic system. In this sense, it will be needed that women fight for overcoming this system. This struggle will be a significant factor in formation of a democratic system that doesn't discriminate between two sexualities as well as in serving to set women conscious on reliable principles.

Sexual discriminations that have been effective in feminist declaration throughout world in recent years are perceived as an enriching criterion. This fact of discrimination may be possible in a democratic system in which rights of both sexualities are preserved. At this point, it is seen that the fact of discrimination stands vigorously in the attitude of feminist movement, which contributed to the contents of civil society as a result of close relations that it established with many social groups especially after 1980s which support democratic system. In spite of this, it is necessary to emphasize that feminist movement has difficulties in coping with traditional doctrines and it has to integrate with patriarchal system for coming in sight in many fields. At this point we see that social structure that is dominated by patriarchal system, which obstructs the discussion of women question by and large is far away from exhibiting a democratic appearance. We can observe this situation by evaluating regional inequalities among women more clearly. In eastern region, most women live connected to values that patriarchal system raises. Women's being deprived of chance of education because of traditional doctrines, economic difficulties and lack of educational policy of government in the region is a significant factor in women's being oppressed under harsh conditions set by patriarchal system. Education is a supportive element in women's participation into labor life but it is insufficient in rescuing women from social constraint merely as seen in Marmara region. If this situation is assessed for eastern regions, it is observed that women in this region follow women in Marmara region from behind. In this context, the regional inequalities among women not only point out the discrimination level at consciousness of women's rights but also emphasize that dynamics of feminist



movement is insufficient in forming women solidarity, inspite of some legal regulations relevant to women's rights.

After 1980s, we see that Turkish women's movement that struggled for acquirement of women's rights in senses of operation and declaration organized many campaigns, meetings and panel discussions and aided women in rural areas through associations and foundations that they established for this purposes. Today, it is needed to emphasize that these developments that point out that women are in mutual support around women question are insufficient in realizing the social transformation. For this reason, it is necessary to re-discuss on the internal dynamics of women's movement and review problems of women in the light of social problems.

Feminist movement in Turkey has to develop a social awareness regional inequalities among women obstruct the arising of women consciousness in patriarchal system and so formation of an effective women's rights contention. In this context, women's movement has to extend the scope of its activity country-wide and concentrate on studies of making women even at solitary places conscious of women's rights. Taking support of government will strengthen its power in these activities that may have an important part in realization of social transformation. Government needs a transformation that facilitates the preservation of women rights for reaching a democratic concept. In this context, government's being in cooperation with associations organizing activities of women presents a situation in favor of government. However, government has to establish a platform that supports

the fight of women's movement about women question by allowing regulations that improve positions of women in educational life, labor life, law field, public sphere, family life and social sphere as well.

We see that rising Turkish women's movement, which stayed quiet in social and political areas for a long time in history, takes part in social discussions about the problems of country. Women' carrying out these discussions more thoroughly and integrated with social facts may provide them to look into problems of country from a wider view and this situation may create different windows open to women question. For this reason, women's movement has to take social problems into consideration in a thoroughgoing way when assessing women question. The distance that they may go through in this subject will be effective to acquire affirmative results in efforts of their penetration into political area.

By this way, it will be possible to increase the percentages of women in administrative mechanisms. The increase of number of women that may utilize these positions to serve to constitute qualified regulations relevant to women question may be a significant step towards the development of democracy. In this progress, the obstructing regulations in political system have to be annulled and an attitude that supports the participation of women into politics has to be made widespread. It is seen that women oppressed under social constraints can't get support from their environment about being able to speak in regulations about themselves. This situation is a result of traditional roles bore onto women by patriarchal system, and it

is seen in eastern regions in which women are deprived of educational possibilities and participation in public life more than Marmara region.

The representation of women in eastern region has to be encouraged for reducing the damage in process of democratic formation that is caused by regional inequality among women in social and political spheres causes. In this context, improvement of positions of women will eliminate the regional inequalities among women. For achieving this end, first of all government has to take social structure and traditional values into consideration when bringing regulations relevant to women into life. We see that regional inequalities among women in today's social structure as an evidence of that regulations made in Republican period couldn't reach to the aimed end points out that it is impossible to achieve success without internalization of new formations by society. In this context, governmental and women associations have to examine social structure deeply and create solutions that will prevail traditional values into transformation.

These studies will serve to form a social mentality towards the elimination of regional inequality among women that has been on the agenda recently and dissolve the patriarchal social structure especially in eastern regions. By this way, it will be possible that women in eastern regions of which an improvement will be achieved in social positions benefit from possibilities such as education, working conditions, socialization. This situation will lay the groundwork for elimination of regional inequalities among women and formation of more effective women solidarity. In this context, advocating egalitarian system in steps towards development of democracy is

very important in eliminating regional inequalities in social and cultural areas among women. In this context, taking women question in the agenda at platforms assessing democratization will prevent aimless discussions.



## CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the regional inequalities among women are scrutinized in respect to social integration. During the historical process of women question in Turkey which the Tanzimat Period, the Second Constitutional Period and Republican regime, the reforms relevant to women who had a strategic importance in the process of espousal of Westernization and modernization through the society could not reach the point that aimed and this situation constituted the regional inequalities among women.

For the purpose of evaluation of the current situation of regional inequalities among women in the light of concrete findings, a survey study which consists of illustration of two regions, Marmara Region and East Anatolia Region, which have the different characteristics in terms of socio-economic income level and ethnical structure was made. The Marmara Region has the highest socio-economic income level and the East Anatolia Region has the lowest socio-economic income level and a rich ethnical structure. In the survey study that was based on interview method, the content of the questions contained educational level, the level of participation to social activities, business life, the approach to politics, cultural level, and the degree of using health service and family life in order to analyze the current situation of regional inequalities of women in the concept of social integration.

The findings of survey support the existence of regional inequalities among women. According to these findings, these unequal circumstances among women

mostly occur as a result of unequal discrimination of educational possibilities through the entire society. The lack of education causes the economic dependency of women. The results of survey points out that the problems of women who confined to house with the roles of good wife and mother that are shaped by traditional behavioral principles are the main findings in terms of regional inequalities among women. Women who live in Marmara Region which has the highest socio-economic income level can benefit from educational and business opportunities. In Marmara Region, this situation protects women against the traditional pressures and serves to the development of their social status by providing the visibility of them in public sphere.

In the survey study, the regional inequalities among women can be observed in the approach of women to the politics and the level of participation of them to social activities. In East Anatolia Region where women live under the shadow of traditional values, the support of women by their family for participation to political activities is insufficient. The lack of education in eastern Region prevents to have the necessary educational experience for politics. In East Anatolia Region, the social associations are not enough for socialization of women.

During the process of adoption of Westernization model through the society by disregarding the fundamental dynamics of society caused that reforms relevant to women could not penetrate to the entire society. The ensuring social integration got difficult because of the social structure which consists of the contest of reforms with traditional principles. This social order produces the regional inequalities among

women. The negative conditions which are produced by the regional inequalities among women bring about that women faced with problems in concept of social integration.

In the period following the foundation of Republic, there was a decrease in the state politics regarding women question by entering to multiparty parliamentary system after 1950s and this situation continued in the same way until 1980s. In 1980s, women question became one of the important issues in agenda. From 1980s to the recent time social, economical, legal and political problems of women discussed within a broader perspective. The expression of problems relevant to women and solidarity of women in terms of organizations and declarations played an important role in the progress of women's rights. But, these developments could not be enough to realize a change in social mentality. The necessity of a change in social mentality is very important in order to eliminate the regional inequalities among women. However, it is obvious that the traditional pressure environment plays an important role in the emergence of social problems. These situations are the most important findings which survey point out.

Today, public associations and civil organizations which study for development of women's rights should take consideration of the necessity of a social transformation. At this point, these associations should carry their activities to more comprehensive platform by regarding the women's right issue as a social problem. The progresses that would be provided in a wide perspective regarding many fields

from educational possibilities to health service in developing regions would renew the social status of women.

To take faster and more fruitful results from the activities for elimination of regional inequalities among women, women should be participated to political life as an active member. In the current situation, the inadequacy of women's participation to political life prevents to establish a complete democratic society.

In the recent time, the government initiates some positive steps in terms of legal regulations relevant to women. However, in order to ensure of withstanding of these legal regulations to traditional principles, the government and civil associations should produce comprehensive politics and projects in terms of realization of a social mentality by regarding the regional inequalities among women as an obstacle to provide social integration. This situation necessitates to work on building social integration and to ensure the equality in the status of women in terms of regional issues.



## APPENDIX A

### THE FORM OF SURVEY STUDY

**Dear Participant,**

This survey study serves to scientific aims in respect to the thesis of the graduate program. The information given by you in the survey will only be used for scientific research. In addition, the identity of the person who answers the survey can not be known. It is asked you to sign the choice which explains your situation clearly. Thanks for your joining to the survey.

**Age:** 1. 18-25 2. 26-35 3. 36-45  
4. 46-60 5. 61 and up

**Occupation:** 1. Tradesman  
2. Civil servant  
3. Retired  
4. Worker  
5. Student  
6. Self employed  
7. Housewife  
8.(University Graduate)self-employed  
9. Farmer  
10.Unemployed  
11.Other.....

**Marital Status:** 1. Married  
2. Single  
3. Widowed or divorced

**A1. What is your education status?**

1. Illiterate
2. Elementary school
3. Junior high school
4. High school
5. University
6. Post-graduate

**A2. In your opinion, can women get equal education as men?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**A3. In your opinion what is the reason for women to be deprived of education?**

1. Custom/tradition
2. Marriage at a young age
3. Economical insufficiency
4. Difficulty in transportation
5. Other
6. All of the above

**B1. Is there a newspaper that you regularly read ?**

1. No
2. (Yes) .....

**B2. Is there a magazine that you regularly read ?**

1. No
2. (Yes).....

**B3. What sort of magazines do you read?**

1. Magazine
2. Intellectual-cultural

3. Science-technical
4. Fashion/women magazines
5. Decoration magazines
6. Hand crafts/painting
7. Other
8. All of the above

**B4. How would you rate your level of book reading?**

1. I read rarely.
2. I read occasionally
3. I read very frequently
4. I have no opinion

**B5. What kind of books do you read?**

1. Intellect-philosophy
2. Politics
3. History
4. Research-Investigation
5. Literature
6. Art
7. Science-technology
8. Other
9. All of the above

**C1. Do you participate in activities such as cinema, theater, exhibition etc.?**

1. I almost do not participate
2. Once a week on the average
3. Once a month on the average
4. Once in a few months

**C2. Is there an institution in your vicinity with activities relevant to women ?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**D1. Do you have any affiliation to any political party, association**

**or a similar nongovernmental organization?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**D2. Would you consider participating in politics?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**D3. What does your family think about women participation in politics?**

1. They support it
2. They are against it
3. I have no opinion

**D4. In your opinion, what is the reason for having only a small number of women in politics?**

1. Women do not want to participate in politics
2. No opportunities are given to women in politics
3. They can not get support from their families/community
4. Due to responsibilities such as house work and care of children
5. Economical insufficiency
6. They find themselves to be inadequate for politics
7. Other
8. All of the above

**E1. Do you have children?**

1. No
2. (Yes).....

**E2. Do you give importance to birth control?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**E3. Have you been subjected to violence within the family?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**E4. What is your opinion about the government opening up shelter homes for women subjected to violence?**

1. I support it
2. I am against it
3. I have no opinion

**E5. What is your view on marrying off women at a young age?**

1. Normal
2. I am against it
3. I have no opinion

**E6. Do you follow up the amendments in the Civil Code?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**E7. In case of divorce, would you change your mind under reactions from your community?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**E8. In your opinion what is the most important difficulty encountered by women when making the decision to divorce?**

.....

**E9. What is your reason for divorce?**

.....

**F1. What is your reason for not working?**

1. My husband does not want me to work.
2. I can't work due to my responsibilities such as housework/children care
3. My family is against it
4. I do not have sufficient education
5. I do not want to work
6. I can not find a job
7. Other
8. All of the above

**F2. What are the problems you are encountering in your work life?**

1. Harassment
2. Inequality of wages
3. Lack of day-care centers
4. Other
5. All of the above

**F3. Do you have social security?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**F4. Does your husband support you on your decision to work?**

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have no opinion

**F5. What is your family's opinion on working women?**

1. Positive
2. Negative
3. I have no opinion

**G1. To what extent do you benefit from health services in your region?**

1. Sufficient
2. Medium
3. Insufficient
4. I never use these services

**G2. From where do you generally meet your health needs?**

1. Village clinics
2. State or SKK hospitals
3. Private hospitals and polyclinics
4. Other
5. I have no opinion

**G3. How do you rate the government's policy on women's health issue?**

1. Sufficient
2. Medium
3. Insufficient
4. I have no opinion

**H1. In your opinion what is the greatest problem of women in Turkey?**

.....

**H2. In your opinion what should be the most important regulation that needs to be established in Turkey?**

.....

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