

## Attitudes Towards the Status of Women in Turkish Society: The Case of Istanbul\*

Ömer Çaha\*\*

### **Abstract**

*Moving from the case of Istanbul this paper emphasizes on the attitudes of Turkish society towards women's status and roles. Based upon a field work carried out in Istanbul, in 2008, it quests how Turkish society perceives woman's nature, her familial, social, economic and political roles. As the result of this investigation indicates Turkish society seems to develop an egalitarian attitude towards gender roles either in familial or social and political life. This can be associated to the modernization of Turkey that has been followed for two hundred years on the attempts to articulate women into the public life in particular through education and employment. It can be said that women have been taken by the ruling elites as the mark of Turkish modernization over the basis of western values. Despite the deep rooted patriarchal values in Turkish culture, perhaps this pattern of change has paved the way for the development of an egalitarian attitude towards gender roles in Turkish society.*

**Keywords:** *Gender, Gender Roles, Social Attitudes, Equality, Women's Movement, Turkish Women.*

---

\* This study has been financially supported by Fatih University. I would like to send my sincere thanks and appreciations to Fatih University Project Development Center.

\*\* Fatih University. ocaha@fatih.edu.tr

### **Introduction**

Based upon a case study carried out in Istanbul, this paper focuses on the attitude of Turkish people towards women's status and roles. More clearly put, while scrutinizing societal perception on both women's nature and role in family, society and politics, the key question asked in the paper will be whether or not the Turkish public has an egalitarian point of view as far as the gender roles in not only familial but also social, political and economic life are concerned. In that respect, the paper will deal with, more specifically, such diverse issues as cultural perception on women's nature, popular attitude toward the gender division of labor at home and in the society, women's employment in the public sphere, women in administrative positions, domestic violence against women, and the traditionally-observed honor crimes mostly in rural areas.

### **Research Method and Sampling**

As described above this research is based upon a survey done in Istanbul during the period of 15-30 September 2008. The survey has been conducted in ten different districts of Istanbul over a sampling group including 560 respondents aged over 18 years old. In the selection of the sampling group the gender, age and educational quotas have been considered carefully. In respect to the gender quota, men and women have been included in the survey equally. With regard to the age category the sampling group aged in between 18-35 seems to be the dominant one which is close to the true picture of Turkish population. When the education level is considered it seems that the high school and university educated respondents take place more than less-educated respondents. This is because of the fact that Istanbul is a city with a high number of university students. Therefore, it is much more likely that the rate of university students in the survey is higher than its average in Turkey (TÜİK). The following table gives the demographic distribution of the sampling.

**Table 1: Demographic Features of the Sampling**

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Women	280	50,00
Men	280	50,00
<b>AGE</b>		
18-25	153	27,32
26-35	196	35,00
36-45	119	21,25
46-60	84	15,00
61 and over	8	1,43
<b>EDUCATION</b>		
Non-literate	5	0,89
Primary school	116	20,71
Secondary school	81	14,46
High school	208	37,14
University	150	26,79
<b>Total</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>100</b>

The questionnaires used in the survey have been applied in accordance with the simple random sampling technique. Thus, the questionnaires have been applied to the sampling group in formerly determined streets of ten districts in a random way. The analysis of the data has been done according to the gender difference as well as diverse education levels of the respondents. In the following tables the differences between the attitudes of the genders to the same issue are clearly seen. However, the differences between respondents' attitudes from different education levels to the same question are not given in the tables because of space limitation. But as said above each table is reviewed in reference to the role of education as well as the gender difference.

### **Attitudes towards the Equality of Men and Women**

The attitudes of respondents to the equality of men and women are queried over the basis of two points. In the first point they are asked about the natural equality of the genders, however in the second they are asked about their perception on the social roles of men and women. The following table reveals how the respondents think

about men's and women's nature. As it seen in the table, 58 percent of the respondents have an egalitarian understanding of men's and women's nature. Those who believe that men are naturally superior to women are limited with only 30 percent. Nearly 7 percent of all respondents believe that women are naturally superior to men. As seen in the relevant table those who think in this way are mostly women.

**Table 2: What do you think about the Men's and Women's Nature? (%)**

	Women	Men	Total
Men and women are naturally equal	57,9	58,6	58,2
Men are naturally superior to women	26,4	33,6	30,0
Women are naturally superior to men	8,6	5,7	7,1
Men and women are naturally different	5,7	1,1	3,4
Other answers	0,6	8,0	0,7
No answer	1,1	0,0	0,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

In respect to the attitudes indicated according to the gender difference it seems that there is almost no difference between men and women. They both believe that the genders are naturally equal. As seen in the table, men seem to be more likely close than women to the idea that they are naturally superior to women. An opposite attitudes is seen in the reactions of women. Some women believe that they are naturally superior to men. The question above has been analyzed also according to the level of education but it seems that the level of education brings statistically no significant difference between the sexes. In other words, the respondents with high level of education think in the same way with those with lower level of education on the nature of men and women.

The attitudes towards the equality of two genders have been analyzed also in reference to the social division of labor between the genders. Moving from this the sampling group has been asked about their opinion on the social roles of men and women and the replies given by them to this question are seen in the following table. Table 3 reveals that a considerable part of all respondents have a traditional point of view to the gender roles. As seen in the same table nearly 30 percent of respondents believe that a man is primarily responsible from the social issues, however a woman is primarily responsible from the familial issues. It is noteworthy to remark that this

research has been conducted in one of the most developed metropolitan cities of Turkey. One can naturally imagine that a traditional attitude like this is probably more disseminated in the rural areas than the urban areas. Nonetheless to say, 58 percent of the respondents think that men and women are equal in respect to the social division of labor. This means that the modern attitudes on the social roles of men and women seem to be dominant to the traditional attitudes in Turkish society.

**Table 3: What do you think about Men’s and Women’s Social Roles? (%)**

	Women	Men	Total
They should have the same role everywhere	59,6	55,7	57,7
Women should be responsible from the domestic but men from the public issues	22,9	36,8	29,8
Social roles of the sexes change according to different conditions	14,6	5,4	10,0
Other answers	0,7	0,5	0,5
No answer	2,2	1,6	2,0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

A statistically significant difference is apparently seen in the attitudes of men and women when gender difference is considered. It is clearly seen that the percentage of those who believe to the equality of the genders is higher among female respondents than the male respondents. Male respondents are more likely than female respondents to think that men are responsible from social issues while women from the domestic issues. The Table 3 clearly reveals that the percentage of male respondents thinking in this way is nearly 14 percent higher than female respondents. One can conclude that men seem to be more traditional than women in respect to their attitudes towards men's and women's social roles.

The level of education plays statistically significant role as well. The less-educated respondents are more likely to have traditional attitudes than are the more-educated respondents in that respect. The percentage of those who believe that men and women are equal in respect to their social roles is clearly higher among the university educated respondents than others.

Another question asked to the respondents is the one which quests the division of labor at home. As the following table reveals the percentage of those who believe that

men and women are equal in respect to the housework are only 28. About 11 percent of respondents think that the housework is absolutely under the responsibility of women, while 61 percent believes also that women are responsible from the housework but their husband can help them when they need it. This data clearly declares that Turkish society has traditional attitudes towards domestic division of labor.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 4: What do you think about Domestic Division of Labor? (%)**

	Women	Men	Total
Housework belongs to women not to men	6,4	16,1	11,3
Men and women should be equal in doing housework	35,0	19,6	27,3
Man should help his wife at home when she needs it	57,9	62,9	60,4
Other answers	0,3	0,7	0,5
No answer	0,7	0,7	0,7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The gender variable plays statistically important role in that regard. As the data in the relevant table shows, those who believe that the housework belongs to women are mostly male respondents. However, most of the female respondents describe that men and women should be equal at home on the issue of housework. Based on this, one can claim that women are more likely than men to develop an egalitarian reaction to the familial roles of the genders. The education variable brings almost no difference on this issue. In other words, there is statistically no significant difference between the attitudes of less-educated respondents and more-educated respondents about this issue. They behave almost in the same way.

### **Attitudes towards Women and Family**

The attitudes towards women and family have been tested over the basis of several questions. These questions are about such issues as women's work in the public sphere, familial violence against women, the honor crimes seen in the rural

<sup>1</sup> It is worth for note to remark that even in developed countries women are the disadvantageous part in respect to the division of household labor (Fuwa 2004: 751-67)

areas and the size of family. The following table, which is about the first question, reveals that most of the respondents have a positive attitude towards women's work in the public domain. The percentage of those who believe that women should never work is only 8.6 percent. Rest of the respondents thinks that women should work in the public life either on their demand or because of the need of their family. In Turkey over the course of last decades a discussion has developed under the impact of feminist movement on the work of women in a way that work in the public sphere brings freedom to women. According to this discussion women should work in the public sphere independent to economic need of their families. This is needed for women's self esteem and self realization (Friedan 1974). The following table indicates that this idea has a large acceptance among respondents. It seems that about 40 percent of all respondents react in this way.

**Table 5: What do you think about Women's Work in the Public Sphere? (%)**

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
Woman shouldn't work even if her family needs it	4,3	12,9	8,6
Woman can work if her family needs it	32,9	57,9	45,4
Woman should work independent to the need of her family	57,4	22,3	39,8
Other answers	7,5	5,0	6,3
No answer	0,2	2,0	0,2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

As seen in the Table 5 a statistically significant difference is appeared between women's and men's attitudes towards women's work outside of family. When men support women's work in the case of family's need, women support it independent to any need. The percentage of women thinking in this way is two times more than the percentage of men. If the reactions against the work of women portray modern and traditional attitudes, one, moving from the table above, can clearly conclude that men are behaving more traditional than women in that respect. As previously said women's employment has been an important issue discussed in the media, among academic circles and in Turkish cinema in last decades (Çaha, 2010). Those who bring this issue under discussion defend women's work for women's self realization as well as for the possibility of depart from the traditional roles. It seems that a vast

majority of Turkish women approve this idea. The education plays an important role in the reaction of respondents on this issue. The university and higher educated respondents favor more than the less- educated respondents to the work of women in the public arena.

One of the problems seen in Turkey, perhaps as elsewhere, is the domestic violence against women.<sup>2</sup> The following table reveals how the respondents respond a question related to this issue. As it is obviously seen in the table a vast majority of the respondents disapprove the beat of women by men, -their husbands, lovers, brothers or fathers. But 8 percent of all respondents still approve this and this should be considered as a significant sociological problem against women. The domestic violence against women has been a critical issue politicized by feminist movements in Turkey.<sup>3</sup> Despite passionate debates on this issue we have, indeed, little scientific data on the rate of women violated at home (KSGM1). The data seen in the following table indicates the percentage of respondents that legitimize the beat of women by their husbands.

**Table 6: What do you think about the Domestic Violence against Women? (%)**

	Women	Men	Total
Women should never be beaten	97,70	85,4	91,6
Women can be beaten when it is needed	2,21	13,1	7,5
No answer	0,0	1,1	0,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

When the beat of women at home is reviewed according to the gender difference it is clearly seen that the gender factor leads to a statistically significant difference. The percentage of those men who approve the beat of women by their husbands is nearly six times more than that of women. Women are seen more likely to react against domestic violence against women than are men. When education is considered there seems a negative correlation between the level of education and the

<sup>2</sup> It is estimated that the rate of women violated at home is in between 25-35 percents in Turkey, while it is 15 percent in Japan and 71 percent in Ethiopia (Özvarış and others 2008).

<sup>3</sup> One of the issues that led feminist groups to go into street actions in 1980s was, indeed, the existence of domestic violence against women in Turkey. A street action they realized under the name *Purple Needle Campaign* in 1989 was a very effective massive action discussed in media and in academia for long time. This campaign was resulted with the establishment of a foundation devoted to the women violated in domestic life. The *Purple Roof Foundation* has been established after this campaign and it has devoted its energy to struggle against domestic violence against women and to promote the establishment of shelters for women violated at home.



approval of women's beat. Those having university education react against the women's beat, while those with lower education approve it (KSGM2).

One of the important local problems suffered by Turkish women, in particular by those living in rural areas, seems to be the honor crimes, referring to the killing of women having sex outside of marriage. There have been some dramatic stories lived by Turkish women as in the case of Güldünya Tören, originally from the rural part of Turkey, who was killed by her two brothers in 2004 on the claim that she had sex and got pregnant before marriage. Her death penalty was given by her family and it was executed by her brothers in Istanbul. This dramatic event, indeed, shocked Turkish society and became a hot topic in the agenda of Turkish media and among academic circles for long time. Feminist groups drew attention of Turkish public to this specific event and criticized it as an indication of patriarchal norms giving authority to men to control and rule women's body.

As seen in the Table 7 a great majority of the respondents disapprove honor crimes. The percentage of those who strongly disapprove is, as seen in the relevant table, about 68 percent and other 21 percent disapprove it as well. But still 10.5 percent of all respondents approve this action. They think that the action of honor crime can be performed when it is needed. When one considers that this research has been conducted in a metropolitan city like Istanbul and reflects the true picture of Turkish society he can imagine that the percentage of people thinking like this is higher in rural areas than the one given in the following table.

**Table 7: What do you think about Honor Crimes? (%)**

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
Approve	5,0	16,1	10,5
Disapprove	17,1	24,6	20,9
Strongly disapprove	77,9	57,9	67,9
No answer	0,0	1,4	0,7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Given the gender difference, it seems that the attitudes towards honor crimes changes between sexes. Those who approve honor crimes are mostly men. A great percentage of female respondents more than male respondents report that they are strongly against honor crimes. The percentage of women thinking in this way is about

20 percent more than that of men. It is clearly seen that male respondents are more traditional than women on the issue of honor crime. The correlation between attitudes towards honor crime and level of education seems to be positive, but statistically not so significant. The less-educated respondents favor honor crimes more than university educated respondents. But as expressed above, the difference between two levels of education seems to be not significant statistically.

Another issue analyzed in respect to the attitudes towards women and family in this study is the size of family. As it is well known family is in an extended form in traditional societies, while it is nucleus in modern societies. The extended family includes more than one generation as well as has lots of children. The family size tested here considers the number of children desired in a family. Therefore the respondents were asked how many children they think that a family should have. The data in the following table reveals that most of respondents do not favor a family having more than three children. The mostly desired number of children seems to be two or three. Those who think that two children should be found in a family are about 50 percent of all respondents, while those who think that a family should have three children are about 30 percent. The total percentage of respondents thinking in this way is about 80. It is obvious that the third children are mostly desired as an insurance against the high rate of children mortality in Turkey (TÜİK2). It is a fact, as the following table clearly reveals, a small sized family has been envisaged in Turkish society.

**Table 8: How many Children do you think that a Family should have? (%)**

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
Only one child	11,4	3,9	7,7
Two children	52,1	47,9	50,0
Three children	25,0	35,7	30,4
Four children	9,3	7,5	8,4
Five or more than five children	1,8	4,6	3,2
No answer	0,4	0,4	0,4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Although there is statistically no significant difference between the genders in respect to the number of children desired in a family, the percentage of women desiring less children is obviously higher than the percentage of men. Particularly

those who want to have only one child are mostly women. The percentage of women in that regard is three times more than that of men. When three or more than three children become the case the percentage of female respondents decreases more than that of men respondents. The education variable gives a statistically significant difference between the genders. The respondents having higher education report that they desire less than two children in a family while those having lower education express that they demand more than two and even three children. Those who want more than four children are mostly less-educated men.

In short, considering the four points analyzed above one can clearly claim that a decreasing trend is seen in Turkish society towards traditional values in respect to women and family. It also can be said that women place more value on modern way of life than men in Turkey, considering the data presented above. In addition to the gender variable the education also plays a significant role in the evolution of traditional values towards modern ones. The increase in the level of education clearly results with a tendency towards egalitarian values between men and women in Turkey. The decrease in the level of education, by the same token, gives way to the traditional way of life.

### **Attitudes towards Women Movement and Organizations**

As previously expressed an important women movement has developed in Turkey in the post-1980s and it succeeded to draw attention of Turkish public to the local problems suffered by Turkish women (Tekeli 1990). Women movement has a considerable popularity in media and among academic circles. But it is a matter of question how ordinary citizens, in particular, women with no political stance are familiar with this movement. This is the reason why this issue has been questioned in this study over the basis of two interrelated questions. The answers given to the first question, which is about the respondents' familiarity with women movement, is clearly revealed in the Table 9. As seen in the relevant table nearly half of all respondents are familiar with feminist movement and they know what feminism is about. Also about 23 percent of all respondents have heard the name of feminism but they don't know what feminism is absolutely about. Those who are not familiar with feminism are about 27 percent. The table clearly indicates that feminist movement has been successful in getting Turkish public heard or known about it even though it is a late developed movement, comparing with its western counterparts (Tekeli 1989).

**Table 9: Have You Heard about Feminism? Do you know what it is about? (%)**

	Women	Men	Total
I haven't heard it and I have no idea about it	14,6	40,0	27,3
I have heard it, but I don't know what it is about	23,2	24,3	23,8
I have heard it and I know what it is about	61,4	35,0	48,2
No answer	0,7	0,7	0,7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The gender difference plays statistically significant role in the popularity of feminism. As evidently seen in the table above those who are familiar with feminism are mostly women. Nearly 61 percent of female respondent remark that they are familiar with feminism and they know what feminism is about. The rate of female respondents who are familiar with but don't know about the struggle of feminism is about 23 percent. It means that nearly 84 percent of female respondents are familiar with feminism in this or that way. But the total percentage of those male respondents who are familiar with feminism and know about its claims is about 35 percent. These records evidently reveal that the gender difference plays an important role in the popularity of feminism. By the same token, the education variable also plays positive role in the popularity of feminism. Nearly 80 percent of illiterate respondents denounce that they are not familiar with feminism. However, only 7 percent of the respondents having university education are not familiar with feminism. This means that education gives about 73 percent difference in that respect.

The respondents who are familiar with feminism and know what feminism is about have been asked about their attitudes towards feminism. The following table reveals the reaction of these respondents about feminism. As the relevant table indicate almost half of all respondents approve feminism while other half does not approve it. But it seems that those who remark that they support feminism are more than those who describe that they are against it. The percentage of pro-feminist respondents is about 19. However, those who are strongly against feminism are nearly 12 percent. The opponents of feminism in Turkish media have propagated it, for long time, that it is an anti-man movement. Given the existence of such a negative propaganda against feminism, one can obviously claim that the percentage of those who favor feminism is quite important.

**Table 10: What do you think about Feminism? (%)**

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
It is needed and I strongly support it	23,8	10,2	18,9
It is needed, but I don't support it	30,8	27,6	29,6
It is not needed and I don't approve it	36,6	42,9	38,9
It is not needed and I'm strongly against it	8,7	18,4	12,2
No answer	0,4	0,4	0,4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The gender variable seems to play statistically significant role in favoring or disfavoring feminism. Women, as presented in the table above, take a pro-stance position to feminism while men take an anti-position. While nearly 24 percent of female respondents strongly support feminism, only 10 percent of male respondents support it. Similarly nearly 9 percent of female respondents clearly denounce that they are strongly against feminism. On the other hand this percentage is about 18 among male respondents. One can shortly say that women are more likely than man to clearly give support to feminist movement. The education variable does not play any statistically significant role in that respect. In other words there seems almost no serious difference between the attitudes of respondents with different educational levels.

Feminism has developed in Turkey, at the beginning, in the streets along 1980s. But when coming to 1990s it started to follow a different policy. In other words, feminism has evolved into what is called "institutional movement" from being a "street movement" (Bora and Güldal 2002). The reason why Turkish feminism is defined as an institutional movement after 1990s, by those who study feminism, is because of the associations that they have found. Feminist groups have established different associations, each dealing with a different issue concerning women in a way. The Association to Support and Train Female Candidates (*Kadın Adayları Destekleme Derneği*), the Flying Broom (*Uçan Süpürge*), and the Purple Roof (*Mor Çatı*) are some of the prominent women's associations established by feminist groups. But also non-feminist groups have organized under the banner of different associations. The respondents in this survey have been questioned if they have affiliation with any feminist or non-feminist women's organization. The following table reflects the replies of the respondents to this question.

**Table 11: Are you affiliated with any Women's Organization? (%)**

	Women	Men	Total
Affiliated with any one or more	2,68	0	2,68
Affiliated with no one	97,32	100	97,32
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

As seen in the table above the percentage of respondents affiliated with any women's organizations seems to be quite less. Only 2.68 percent of female respondents are affiliated with any women's organizations. On the other hand, no male respondent seem to have membership of any women's organizations. The data presented here mirrors, indeed, the interest of Turkish citizens in the civil societal organizations. As seen above even though most of female respondents agree with the claims of feminist groups, only a small part of them participate in the activities of feminist or even non-feminist organizations. This indicates an evidently visible paradox between the attitudes and behaviors of Turkish citizens. As it is commonly known the "attitude" refers to a person's inner thoughts and feelings, while "behavior" to an outward expression of attitude.

### **Attitudes towards Women's Participation in Politics**

It is a matter of fact that women form a small minority of political representation in both local governments and national parliament in Turkey. The less-representation of women in representative bodies has been passionately marked as one of the fundamental problems of Turkish women by feminist groups. Turkish women were given election right in 1935. But the percentage of their representation in the parliament had never exceeded 4.5 until 2007 general elections. It was the first time that women's rate reached to 9.1 percent in the national parliament in this election (TÜİK3). This is found still less by feminist groups, drawing attention to the well-developed democratic societies. The representation of women in the local assemblies is less than their rate in the national parliament. It is evident that women's percentage has never gone over 3 percent in Turkish local councils (Çaha 2008).

This is the reason why feminist groups demand application of gender quotas. For them the application of gender quota will give positive discrimination to women and thus will serve the increase of their representative in the parliament and in the local assemblies (Sayın 2007). Through this study the respondents have been requested

if they support the application of gender quotas to the genders or not. The following table presents the reaction of the respondents to this question. It is clearly seen that those who approve gender quotas are less than those who disapprove it. As presented in the table, 61 percent of all respondents are against any quota. Only about one third of all respondents agree with the implementation of gender quotas.

**Table 12: What do you think about the Application of Gender Quotas? (%)**

	Women	Men	Total
Approve	34,3	32,5	33,4
Disapprove	59,3	62,5	60,9
Other answers	2,9	2,9	2,9
No answer	3,6	2,1	2,9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

It is obviously evident, as seen in the table above, the gender variable plays statistically no significant role in that respect. In other words, there seems almost no difference between men's and women's attitudes towards the application of gender quotas. Male and female respondents develop the same reaction to a policy envisaging different quotas for the genders. The education also brings no difference. The reaction of less-educated respondents to the gender quota is almost similar to the reaction of more-educated respondents.

As a complementary question to the question above, the respondents have been asked a further question which quests the percentage of women MPs that they want to see in the national parliament. Those who want to see no woman MP in the parliament are less than 5 percent. But the existence of disapproval to the election of women candidate is an interesting point and indeed is a matter of different research. As the following table reveals the percentage of those respondents who want to see less than 20 percent women MPs in the parliament are about 19. However, the percentages of those who want to see women MPs in between 21-50 percents in parliament are about 65. Nearly 9 percent of respondents wish to see more than 51 percent of women MPs in the parliament. It is noteworthy to remark that the data in this table indicates that Turkish citizens are open for seeing women MPs more than their current proportion in the parliament even though they don't agree with the application of gender quotas.

**Table 13: What do you think about the Rate of Women MPs in the Parliament? (%)**

	Women	Men	Total
There should be no woman MP in the parliament	3,2	5,7	4,5
Women MPs should be in between 1-20 percents	10	27,8	19
Women MPs should be in between 21-50 percents	69,7	60,7	65,3
Women MPs should more than 51 percent	14,3	3,6	8,9
No answer	2,9	2,1	2,5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

When the analysis is done according to the gender difference it becomes clearly evident that gender variable plays statistically significant role in attitudes towards women's representation in the parliament. The percentage of female respondents who want to see a high proportion of women MPs in the parliament is clearly higher than the percentage of male respondents. As seen in the relevant table the percentage of male respondents wishing to see less than 20 percent of women MPs in the parliament are greater than the percentage of female respondents. However, the percentage of female respondents who want to see women MPs in between 21-50 percent is apparently higher than male respondents. A sharp distinction is seen in the item about the percent of women MPs more than 51 percent. As clearly seen the percentage of female respondents wishing to see more than 51 percent women MPs is almost four times more than the percentage of male respondents. A similar difference to the gender variable is seen in education variable. Education also plays statistically significant role in that regard. Those having less-education want to see fewer women MPs in the parliament while the more-educated respondents envisage seeing more women MPs in the parliament.

### Conclusion

As a concluding remark, as presented in the tables above, one can say that Turkish society seems to develop modern attitudes towards gender roles. It is apparently evident, as presented in the tables above; an egalitarian attitude has been disseminated among Turkish public towards women's and men's nature as well as their social and political roles. This can be associated to the modernization of Turkey. As it is well known, Turkey has undertaken a modernization project over the course of last two hundred years. Either during the Ottoman Empire or the Republican Turkey,



established in 1923, the reference for modernization and change has always been western values. Western values, particularly those related to women's equality with men have always stimulated and still motivate the leaders of the reforms. It is generally accepted by the students of Turkish politics that women have been taken by the reforms, during the course of two hundred years, as the mark of Turkish modernization over the basis of western values (Göle 1992: 64). The reformist leaders in both Ottoman Empire and Turkey, therefore, have given priority to the education of women as well as to their articulation in the public life. Despite the long breath and deep rooted patriarchal values in Turkish culture, perhaps this pattern of change is the basic factor which paves the way for the development of egalitarian attitudes in Turkish society.

### References

- Bora, A. and Güldal, A. (eds). 2002. *90'larda Türkiye'de Feminizm*. İstanbul: İletişim.
- Çaha, Ö. 2008. *Kadın Sivil Toplum Örgütleri ve Yerel Demokrasi: İstanbul'daki Kadın Kuruluşlarının Yerel Düzeydeki Siyasal ve Toplumsal Katılıma İlişkin Tutumları*. İstanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi.
- Çaha, Ö. 2010. *Sivil Kadın: Türkiye'de Kadın ve Sivil Toplum*. Ankara: Savaş Yayınları.
- Friedan, B. 1974. *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: Dell.
- Fuwa, M. 2004. "Macro-level Gender Inequality and the Division of Household Labor in 22 Countries." *American Sociological Review*. 69, 6: 751-67.
- Göle, N. 1992. *Modern Mahrem: Medeniyet ve Örtünme*. İstanbul: Metis Yayınları.
- KSGM1. 2008. *Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddet Araştırması 2008*. Ankara: Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü.
- KSGM2. 2008. [http://www.ksqm.gov.tr/tdvaw/doc/tdvaw\\_summary.pdf](http://www.ksqm.gov.tr/tdvaw/doc/tdvaw_summary.pdf). (accessed November 5, 2008).
- Özvarış, Ş. and others. 2008. *Kadına Yönelik Aile İçi Şiddetle Mücadelede Sağlık Hizmetleri*. Ankara: Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü.
- Sayın, A. 2007. *Kota El Kitabı*. Ankara: KA-DER.
- Tekeli, Ş. 1989. "'80'lerde Türkiye'de Kadınların Kurtuluşu Hareketinin Gelişmesi.'" *Birikim* 3.

---

Tekeli, Ş. (Ed.). *1990 Kadın Bakışaışısından 1980'ler Türkiye'sinde Kadın*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları.

TÜİK1. 2008. "Eğitim İstatistikleri."

[http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?tb\\_id=37&ust\\_id=11](http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?tb_id=37&ust_id=11). (accessed October 15, 2008)

TÜİK2. 2008. "Demografik İstatistikler" <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/demografiapp/olum.zul>. (accessed October 25, 2008).

TÜİK3. 2008. "Seçim İstatistikleri.

"[http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?tb\\_id=42&ust\\_id=12](http://www.tuik.gov.tr/VeriBilgi.do?tb_id=42&ust_id=12). (accessed October 20, 2008).