Envisioning an-Other Education Space: Opportunities and Challenges in Adult Education Programs for Women in Turkey

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Envisioning an-Other Education Space:
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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Education

by

Ryan JoAnn Donaghy

2016
ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Envisioning an-Other Education Space:
Opportunities and Challenges in Adult Education Programs for Women in Turkey

by

Ryan JoAnn Donaghy
Doctor of Philosophy in Education
University of California, Los Angeles, 2016
Professor Sandra Harding, Co-Chair
Professor Val D. Rust, Co-Chair

Women’s education has been promoted as both a key objective of the global campaign for gender equality and as a *sine qua non* of long-term sustainable development. In the extant literature, non-formal education has been advanced as a tool for social change and women’s empowerment. Moreover, recent reports published by international development agencies and transnational organizations have highlighted the role of non-governmental organizations in the provision of adult education programs. However, neither the academic literature nor policy reports identify the extent to which the participation of women-led non-governmental organizations has been taking place.
This dissertation addresses the gap in both the academic literature and international adult education policy by exploring women-led civil society organizations in Turkey as *anOther* space for non-formal education programs.

Drawing on two years of fieldwork, including archival research, curricula collection and in-depth interviews with twenty four program coordinators located in women-led civil society organizations throughout Turkey, I argue that women’s knowledges and experiences have been marginalized within an androcentric canon of adult education literature. Women’s diverse experiences of marginalization not only serve as the impetus for developing alternative non-formal education programs in women-led civil society organizations, but also inform the pedagogies practiced within these spaces. In examining these diverse experiences, I highlight the opportunities and challenges inherent in the practice promoting women’s adult education within these spaces.

Women participating in this study reflected on the challenges of working with the Turkish government, international donor agencies and gender ‘experts’ from within and outside of Turkey. In particular, women participating in this study argue that these challenges have negatively affected the implementation of programs related to gender-based violence interventions and occupational courses for women. However, participants in this study also offered tangible recommendations to both improve and ensure the long-term sustainability of women’s adult education programs. Participants argue that these recommendations are fundamental to the policy and practice of promoting women’s non-formal education programs in Turkey.
The dissertation of Ryan JoAnn Donaghy is approved.

Richard Desjardins
Edith S. Omwami
Nayereh Tohidi
Val D. Rust, Co-Chair
Sandra Harding, Co-Chair

University of California, Los Angeles
2016
To my mother, Dora Donaghy, to the women in this study and to those everywhere who envision and fight for an Other space…
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Reframing Student Participation: Identifying Students’ Perceptions of Participatory Norms in Turkish and American College Classrooms. Accepted to the Comparative and International Education Society Regional Conference, October 28, 2011.
Chapter One:

Introduction

“There can be no global social justice without global cognitive justice.”
- Boaventura de Sousa Santos

This project began during one of my extended trips to Ankara, Turkey. During that time, I was fortunate to become acquainted with a number of women who were working on various education and training programs geared towards improving gender relations and women’s equality in Turkey. I am eternally grateful to these women, who allowed me to both observe and participate in a number of conferences and meetings where I was able to gain some insight into the challenges of promoting gender-awareness and/or gender-sensitivity programs in their local communities.

These opportunities piqued my interest in understanding the landscape of women’s adult education programs. Yet, through my initial research, I found very little in the academic literature that seemed to capture or reflect the nature of activities organized through these programs, the interpersonal dynamics between various program organizers or the multitude of actors who influenced the development and sustainability of these programs. Instead, with some notable exceptions and as many others have argued,¹ I found that, by and large, androcentrism pervaded the academic discourse of adult education. This criticism extends to the more “radical” or critical examinations of popular education and social movements, where feminists have argued that a “phallocentric paradigm of liberation”² informed much of the work on liberatory or critical

pedagogy and education.3

In this project, I chose to research the margins4 of adult education, incorporating new critical perspectives that help to deconstruct the androcentrism and Eurocentrism that continue to pervade the assumptions, values, practices and research of adult education. While it has been acknowledged that women’s non-formal and adult education programs are organized and executed primarily through women-led organizations,5 their work continues to be marginalized within the larger conversations on adult education. With this in mind, I “started off6” my research from the experiences of education coordinators located in women-led civil society organizations (CSOs) in Turkey, collecting qualitative interviews, curricula and other texts to identify how and in what ways these women are attempting to resist, negotiate and transform a range of gendered social relations through non-formal education initiatives.

At the same time, with the understanding that the field of adult education has suffered from a lack of funding and continues to be overshadowed by formal schooling in academic literature and education policy,7 I was uncomfortable claiming that my research was positioned at a “critical

distance from ‘the normal’ without a more explicit, critical analysis of how normal has been discursively constructed in the academic literature and empirical data reports of adult education within the context of globalization. Much of the research in the field of education has suffered from the “tendency to use globalization in a rather loose and often determinist way” that subsumes both subjects and agents, and ignores that actors use “the idea of globalization in a rhetorical or discursive sense to further their own projects.” As I discuss further in Chapter Two, many of these projects—particularly in the field of adult education—have prioritized a neoliberal framework of globalization that ignores alternative, subaltern and oppositional strategies associated with the discourse of grassroots globalization.

Reflecting on these challenges, I situated the design of this study through a critical, feminist lens to deconstruct whose knowledge has become globalized in the field of adult education and to identify its implications for alternative or subaltern knowledges of globalization(s). Borrowing from Susan L. Robertson’s (2009) call for the application of a critical theory of space to the field of education, I sought to identify the complex processes at work in the discursive constitution of an ‘adult education’ space and the concomitant absence of ‘women’s adult education.’ I argue that the

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9 Susan L. Robertson, “Absences and Imaginings: The Production of Knowledge on Globalisation and Education,” *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 4, no. 2 (July 2006): 305.
11 In this study, I chose to use both “knowledge” and “experience” in the plural. This reflects my own ontological and epistemological assumptions regarding the socially situated nature of knowledge production and feminist objectivity as “situated knowledges.” These assumptions inform my own political position and the research design of this project. See Donna Haraway, “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,” *Feminist Studies* 14 no. 3 (Autumn 1988): 575-599; Sandra Harding, “Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is ‘Strong Objectivity’?” 49-82; Sandra Harding, “Feminist Standpoints,” 45-69.
12 As will be discussed further in Chapter Two, globalization is used in the plural here to represent my acceptance of multiple forms of globalization, including hegemonic and counter-hegemonic globalizations. See Boaventura de Sousa Santos, “Nuestra America: Reinventing a Subaltern Paradigm of Recognition and Redistribution,” *Theory, Culture and Society* 18, no. 2-3 (June, 2001): 185-217.
“absence” of research on women’s adult education should be reconceptualized as the active production of women’s knowledges and experiences as non-existent in an androcentric canon of knowledge on adult education.\textsuperscript{14} The marginalization of women’s experiences and knowledges both violates global cognitive justice and prevents the potential role of adult education as a mechanism for global social justice.

As a critical, feminist project, this study is grounded in a fundamental assumption is that knowledge is socially situated in historical, political, economic and social contexts which have inhibited the development of conceptual frameworks related to the diversity, and challenges therein, of promoting gender transformative education.\textsuperscript{15} My goal was to underscore alternative ways of thinking about women’s adult education and to identify how certain forms of knowledge have been legitimated while alternative forms have been rendered invisible through multiple sources of power and hegemony. In doing so, I sought not only to illuminate the ways in which adult education policies and practices “are connected to relations of exploitation and domination,” but also to highlight women’s adult education programs as sites where struggles against those very relations are taking place and as “spaces of possible counter-hegemonic actions.”\textsuperscript{16} I also sought to maintain a critical perspective of the recognition of gender in adult education discourse, particularly in areas where its gestural use was reductionist, essentialist and could potentially exacerbate gender misrecognition and “androcentric patterns of cultural value” in the constitution of adult education.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{15} Sandra Harding, “Introduction,” 7.
While I draw from a number of critical feminist perspectives, I was particularly interested in the concepts of absence, space and place. In researching national databases for both formal and adult education as well as policy frameworks published by national and trans-national organizations, I was guided by a desire to understand whether education programs initiated by women-led CSOs could be located in the discursively constructed spaces of adult education. I do not deny that governments continue to play an important role in the constitution, management and sustainability of adult education in national contexts; yet, relying on state-centric models falls short of capturing the multiplicity of actors complicit in the construction of an adult education discourse that marginalize the experiences of women. As Ozga (2000) has argued, “policy is to be found everywhere in education,” and through this project, I sought to identify multiple “policy settings” or “places, processes and relationships where policy is made” and their implications for women’s adult education.

Furthermore, throughout this project, I was wary of an approach that would homogenize women’s adult education as a contained place. Feminist scholars, such as Mohanty (1992), have challenged the notion of universalist gender politics, arguing that differences in race, nationality and class power that characterize women’s political experiences cannot be reduced to a transcendental gender project. In identifying the implications of essentialist tendencies in research, scholars such as Alarcón (1990) have argued that feminist scholarship should focus on developing a politic of

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19 Ibid., 1.
20 Chandra Mohanty, “Feminist Encounters: Locating the Politics of Experience,” in *Destabilizing Theory. Contemporary Feminist Debates*, eds. M. Barrett and A. Phillips (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 82. Here, she problematizes the problems of the politics of transcendence: The political is limited to the personal. If sisterhood itself is defined on the basis of personal intentions, attitudes or desires, conflict is also automatically constructed on only the psychological level.
engagement, which allows for “multiple-voiced subjectivity” and a more critical analysis of the intersection of race, class, and gender in experiencing oppression.  

These important feminist critiques informed my research as I sought to both highlight the multilayered stories of women’s efforts to counter patriarchal oppression through various forms of non-formal education and to underscore that the spaces of adult education are very much hierarchically organized by class, gender, race as well as ethnic, cultural and religious forms of oppression. The experiences participants shared in this project suggest that multiple actors, including women’s adult education “experts,” “academics” and “feminists” are complicit in furthering the marginalization of certain perspectives regarding what “counts” as women’s education. Moreover, as detailed in chapter seven, these critiques allow us to better understand how semantics, including the use of the term “education,” reflect the politics of not only patriarchal oppression, but also of divergence amongst various women’s groups in Turkey.

To understand the complexity of constructing, promoting and sustaining women’s adult education, I begin here with a brief introduction to the literature on women and girls’ education in Turkey, both formal and non-formal, as well as the statement of the problem, research design and an overview of the chapters that comprise this dissertation project.


Women and Girls’ Formal Education in Turkey

Education has been identified both as an important human right\(^{23}\) and the “foundation of transformation,”\(^{24}\) in Turkey. Following the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, education was conceptualized as a crucial “tool for the protection and continuation of the Republic.”\(^{25}\) In accordance with the National Education Basic Act No. 1739, the National Education System in Turkey comprises both formal and non-formal education.\(^{26}\) The Equality of Opportunity section of the same National Education Basic Act ensures that educational opportunities are equal for all men and women regardless of language, religion, race and sex. Despite legal assurances regarding equality of educational opportunity, research indicates that until the late 1990s, women and girls lagged behind men and boys at every level of formal education.\(^{27}\)

Particularly since the United Nations (UN) Fourth World Conference in Beijing (1995), critical reforms have been adopted to advance women and girl’s formal education in Turkey, including the extension of primary mandatory schooling to both boys and girls from five to eight years in 1997 and a commitment to increasing literacy rates amongst all women.\(^{28}\) As a result, literacy rates for women in Turkey increased during this time period, from 72 per cent in 1995 to 81.1 per

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\(^{27}\)TÜSAID, *Kadın-Erkek Eşitliğine Doğru Yürüyüş: Eğitim, Çalışma Yaşamı ve Siyaset*, (İstanbul: Lebib Yalkın Yayınları, 2000).

\(^{28}\)Ibid.
cent in 2004.\textsuperscript{29} Additionally, within the first three years of the nationwide primary school reform in 1997, enrollment rates for girls increased by 18.5 per cent and 11.3 per cent for boys (see Appendix A).\textsuperscript{30} The most recent statistics of the Ministry of National Education (MEB) on formal education indicate that enrollment has increased at all levels of formal education for women and girls.\textsuperscript{31} Furthermore, the same report published by MEB highlights changes in the sex ratio\textsuperscript{32} in enrollment of males and females over the same 18 year period, indicating that by the year 2010, young girls had achieved gender parity and from 2012-2015 had actually surpassed young boys in primary school enrollment.\textsuperscript{33}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Year</th>
<th>Primary Education</th>
<th>Secondary Education</th>
<th>Higher Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>85.63</td>
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<td>1998/99</td>
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<td>1999/00</td>
<td>88.54</td>
<td>74.74</td>
<td>70.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000/01</td>
<td>89.64</td>
<td>74.41</td>
<td>73.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/02</td>
<td>90.71</td>
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<td>75.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/03</td>
<td>91.10</td>
<td>72.32</td>
<td>74.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003/04</td>
<td>91.86</td>
<td>78.01</td>
<td>74.09</td>
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<tr>
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<td>92.33</td>
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<td>74.66</td>
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<td>94.11</td>
<td>79.65</td>
<td>77.65</td>
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<tr>
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<td>96.39</td>
<td>85.81</td>
<td>78.74</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>100.42</td>
<td>89.74</td>
<td>86.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>100.41</td>
<td>93.29</td>
<td>87.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Table One: Gender Ratio in Formal Schooling 1997-2011}


\textsuperscript{32} Sex ratio is determined by dividing female gross schooling ratio by male gross schooling ratio, multiplied by 100 and is considered the equivalent of a gender parity ratio. See T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, Milli Eğitim İstatistikleri, Örgün Eğitim 2014/15 (Ankara: Resmi İstatistik Programı Yayındır, 2015), xvi.

\textsuperscript{33} Ibid. Additionally, according to the same report, during the years 2012-2015, following the legal changes to a 12 year compulsory program, young girls had surpassed young boys’ enrollment in both primary school and lower secondary education.
In the development of Turkey’s formal education policy, the most noteworthy changes for women have been recorded at the level of higher education. While the ratio of women enrolled in higher education in 1930 was 16.3 per cent, by 2007, the ratio of women students in higher education was 43 percent and as of 2014, the ratio has increased to 45 percent. One of the key outcomes of the increasing ratio of women in higher education has been their advancement into professions that have been, on an international scale, historically difficult for women to enter. According to the 2013 Global Gender Index Report, 47.5 per cent of staff at the top five universities in Turkey are women. Moreover, women comprise more than a quarter (27.6 per cent) of practicing lawyers and judges in Turkey and as of 2005, 43.1 per cent of individuals completing their medical residences were women.

Despite the progress toward advancing formal education for women and girls in Turkey, challenges remain. Although advancements can be seen at the level of higher education, according to a 2007 MEB report, of the 1,111,000 children who did not continue their education past elementary

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34 Table Two reflects changes made in accordance with law no. 6287, which extends compulsory education to 12 years, with three, four-year phases.
37 T.C. Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, Milli Eğitim İstatistikleri, Örgün Eğitim, 35.
school 667,000 (60 per cent) were girls.\textsuperscript{41} Furthermore, although literacy rates have improved in recent years for women in Turkey, the percentage of illiterate women is still estimated to be four times larger than that among men (18.2 per cent versus 4.7 per cent).\textsuperscript{42} Moreover, while policy changes over the past 18 years have helped to close enrollment gaps at the primary, secondary and higher education levels, disparities still exist between men and women age 15-49 in the completion of both middle school and high school\textsuperscript{43} These disparities become much more pronounced when examining statistics for educational achievement by region:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>No Education*</th>
<th>Received Elementary Education**</th>
<th>Received Middle School Education**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>94.6</td>
</tr>
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<td>94.7</td>
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<td>92.2</td>
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<td>91.2</td>
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<td>90.0</td>
<td>91.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Anatolia</td>
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<td>92.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Black Sea</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>92.0</td>
<td>90.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Black Sea</td>
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<td>88.2</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Anatolia</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East Anatolia</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>81.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Anatolia</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>85.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>90.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: HUNEE, 2004, p. 35, 26\textsuperscript{44}

*Women between the ages of 15-49 who have not received formal education or did not complete elementary school.

**Individuals between the age of 6-24 years.


\textsuperscript{42} Mine Göğüş Tan, “Women, Education and Development in Turkey,” 111.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.

While regional disparities have been highlighted in both international and national reports related to women’s access to and completion of formal education, these data are further complicated by extensive migration from rural to urban areas in Turkey. As a result, although statistics indicate extreme educational disparities across different regions, closer examination of statistics in metropolitan areas such as Istanbul and Ankara reveal that migration and displacement are also crucial indicators of women and girls’ access to formal education in Turkey.45

Looking beyond access, recent studies have confirmed that the content provided in the form of textbooks, education materials, and curricula in formal educational institutions not only fail to incorporate a holistic approach to gender parity but also perpetuate historical and cultural gender 

45 TÜSİAD, Kadem-Erkek Eşitliğine Doğru Yürütüş: Eğitim, Çalışma, Yaşam ve Siyaset, (İstanbul: Lebib Yalın Yayınları, 2000), 36.
stereotypes in Turkey. As Tanrıöver (2004) argues, formal schools play a fundamental role in the socialization and institutionalization of gender discrimination in Turkish society. In her study, which examined 68 primary school and 75 high school textbooks, she found the following distribution of school subjects reflecting gender discrimination:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number of Discriminatory Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Sciences</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish/Literature and Related Subjects</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion and Morality</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship/Democracy and Human Rights</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Home Economics</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In a more recent study analyzing primary and secondary school textbooks, Güvenli and Tanrıöver (2009) found that 57% of primary school and 50% of secondary school textbooks continue to reflect elements of gender discrimination. In spite of recent efforts to increase women and girls’ access to formal education through Turkish education reforms, when current textbook projects are compared to earlier studies, it is clear that no change has been made in education policies in Turkey to improve the content of what is being taught in formal education institutions.

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Tanrıöver concludes that gender discrimination is not only “one of the most important elements of Turkish cultural identity” but that the formal educational system in Turkey “wants gender discrimination to be learned and memorized in a recurrent manner from the earliest years of school.”

Despite the identification of education as a basic human right in Turkey, it is clear that challenges persist for women and girls in terms of access and content of educational material. Moreover, while the status of girls’ formal education is identifiable in statistical reports on formal education published by the Ministry of National Education in Turkey, the status of women’s education, beyond reports related to literacy, is much less clear. Because non-formal education has previously been conceptualized as a potential vehicle for change in the social relations of gender, a review of the non-formal educational activities in Turkey is necessary in order to understand the scope of the challenges for women and girls’ education.

**Women and Girls’ Non-Formal Education in Turkey**

Non-formal education has held an important role in Turkey, with its development paralleling formal education, both before and after the development of the Turkish Republic.

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50 Hülya Uğur Tanrıöver, “Gender Discrimination in Textbooks,” 199.
52 As Türkoğlu and Uça (2011) highlight, the terms “public education” “non-formal” “informal” and “adult” education have been used interchangeably in studies relating to non-formal education. Thus, although non-formal education is the term that is used in this section, the information is also related to the other terms. See Adil Türkoğlu and Sanem Uça, “Türkiye’de Halk Eğitimini: Tarihsel Gelişimi, Sorunları ve Çözüm Önerileri,” *Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi* 2, s. 2 (Aralık 2011): 48-62.
53 Mehmet Bilir (2013) highlights the development of associations and civil society organizations which focused on educational activities including the *Osmancı Bilim Derneği* (1860); the *İslam Öğretim Derneği* (1864); the *Besiktaş Bilim Derneği* (1869); the *İttihat Terakki Fırkası* (1910) and others including the *Türk Ocağı Derneği* (1911), see Mehmet Bilir, “Yetişkin Egitiminin Tarihsel Gelişimi,” in *Yetişkin Eğitimi* der. Ahmet Yildaş ve Meral Uysal (İstanbul: Kalkedon Yayınları, 2013), 42-46.
According to the Ministry of National Education, non-formal education comprises all activities organized alongside or outside of Turkey’s formal education institutions, including the provision of basic education to those who have never entered the formal education system as well as those looking to gain knowledge and skills in conjunction with formal education. In accordance with Education Law no. 789, the first non-formal education institution following the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the Halk Terbiyesi Şubesi was founded in 1926 under the direction of the Ministry of National Education with the responsibility of providing adult and public education. A number of non-formal education institutions, such as the Millet Mektepleri and the Halk Derslikleri in 1927 and the Halk Okuma Odaları in 1930, were opened in the early years of the Turkish Republic with the goal of providing literacy education in accordance with the new alphabet for Turkish language.

Within the past 90 years, non-formal education in Turkey has undergone a number of changes, including a set of eight five-year development plans. Many of the non-formal education projects led by the Turkish Ministry of National Education have been implemented in conjunction with international organizations, including UNICEF, the European Union and the World Bank and UNESCO, including conferences such as CONFITEA (International Conference on Adult Education, UNESCO). Exceptions to these developments occurred in 1951 and 1980, both periods of political transition in Turkey, when civil society organizations, including non-formal education centers were shut down by the government.

While statistical reports of non-formal education activities have been periodically recorded since the educational year 1968-1969, the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat), has been

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55 Ibid., 48-49.
57 Ibid.
conducting yearly reports on non-formal educational activities since 2010.\(^{58}\) National Reports on non-formal educational activities are conducted with data compiled from the educational institutions of the Ministry of National Education, the Presidency of Religious Affairs, Koran schools, universities, municipalities, trade unions, associations and foundations throughout Turkey.

According to the most recent statistics on non-formal education in Turkey (2012-2013), student enrollment in non-formal educational institutions totaled 8,491,953, roughly 12.8 per cent of the Turkish population,\(^{59}\) with 4,274,729 male participants and 4,217,224 female participants.\(^{60}\) Additionally, according to this same report, there were 26,941 non-formal education institutions,\(^{61}\) which includes 13,920 institutions established as non-formal education and 13,021 established for Koran courses. The 13,920 institutions established for non-formal education are divided into non-formal education institutions managed by the Turkish Ministry of Life-Long Learning (1624), and the Turkish Ministry of Special Education Guidance and Counseling Services (12,296). According to reports by the Turkish Ministry of National Education (2012-2013), examples of both types of state-sponsored non-formal education institutions include the following:\(^{62}\)

| Table Five: Courses offered by State-Sponsored Non-formal Education Institutions |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Practical Trade Schools for Girls |
| Public Training Centers | Maturation Institutions |
| Vocational Training Centers | Adult Technical Training Centers |
| Koran Courses |
| Private Education Centers |
| Motor Vehicle Drivers Courses |
| Job Training Centers for the Mentally Impaired |
| Job Training Centers for Autistic Individuals |
| Science and Arts Centers for Children with Superior Intelligence and Ability |
| Tourism Training Centers |


\(^{61}\)Ibid.

\(^{62}\)Ibid.
The data compiled for the National Statistics on Non-formal Education in Turkey largely reflects the non-formal educational activities of programs affiliated or coordinated by the National Ministry of Education. From the data, there is a clear presence of non-formal education activities in Turkey and participation of both men and women in non-formal education courses. However, as Tan (2008) argues, despite the increased attention paid to non-formal, adult education activities in Turkey, problems for women and girls persist in terms of enrollment and curricula in these programs. Tan goes on to highlight that while 62 per cent of women reported participating in some type of official program conducted by the National Ministry of Education between the years 1999-2000, recent reports indicate that that percentage has fallen to 49 per cent.63

Furthermore, recent studies have indicated that gender bias exists in enrollment patterns in adult education programs in Turkey, particularly in those programs related to developing workforce and employment skills. For example, while workforce development skills programs hosted by IŞKUR, the government-sponsored Turkish employment agency, had a total reported enrollment of 11,946 individuals, only 3,823, or 33 per cent of those in attendance were women.64 Traditional gender roles were also found to be reflected in the enrollment patterns for educational activities hosted by public education centers, specifically the Halk Eğitim Merkezleri: Out of 25 different courses offered through programs of various Halk Eğitim Merkezleri, the ones most frequently enrolled in by women are weaving (97 per cent), hand crafts (94 per cent), knitting (94 per cent), while the lowest enrollments are in livestock (1.3 per cent), furnishings (0.2 per cent), electronics (1 per cent) and construction (2.75 per cent). These trends, as well as other concerns have led many researchers to suggest that the tools provided in these non-formal education programs have actually

64 Ibid.
served to intensify traditional stereotypes of gender roles in Turkey.65

Dinçer and Tekin-Koru (2013) argue that in Turkey, where the national education strategy is rooted in the development of formal education and where there is no clear strategy regarding the nature and implementation of adult education, research both on the participation structure as well as the extent of non-formal education in Turkey is lacking.66 This dearth in research extends to the challenges of identifying women’s adult education programs not coordinated or funded by the Turkish government. Specifically, in examining national reports on non-formal education, it is difficult to locate or identify whether such types of education are recognized or implemented in Turkey.67

Statement of the Problem

Women’s education has been promoted as both a key objective of the global campaign for gender equality and as a *sine qua non* of long-term sustainable development. As suggested in a World Bank (2002) report, the historical, cultural and social systematic exclusion of women from access to resources, public services and representation in political and other decision-making institutions has not only exacerbated gender inequities but has also thwarted political and economic development at the local and national levels.68 Consequently, a myriad of international policies, programs and projects have prioritized women’s education as “the basis for the full promotion and improvement

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67 In examining the statistical reports published by the MEB as well as reports on how the data was collected, there was no mention to programs that focused on gender or women’s adult education. Specifically, of the 2408 types of institutions published by The Directorate for Lifelong Learning in Turkey, none include specific reference to the study of women, women’s human rights or women’s research, although the indicator for that type of institution exists. See http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=13660; http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreTablo.do?alt_id=1018. Some UNESCO reports do make mention of a few programs in Turkey, but largely in reference to women’s organizations working on literacy and do not make mention of other types of programs. See, for example, http://www.unesco.org/UIL/litbase/?menu=4&programme=141.
of the status of women” and as a mechanism for eradicating barriers and “empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate fully in the development process.”

In examining the more recent data on women and girls collected by trans-national organizations, it appears that progress has been made, particularly for girls, in terms of access and literacy across all levels of formal education. However, while the issue of “gender” has begun to receive more attention in discourse and policy related to international education, the focus continues to prioritize access and literacy, but, as many have argued, “does not advance the education of women.” Disparities persist in women and girls’ education, compounded by reports which suggest that “the educational gains of women and girls do not always translate into improved opportunities.” In key development indicators that have been linked to education, such as health, violence against women, economic opportunities and increased representation in decision-making, women and girls continue to experience inequity in access to the enjoyment of these rights.

Furthermore, when managing the complexity of gender in global data reports, “there is a marked

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tendency to trivialize the plight of women by merely relegating gender to a list of other social disadvantages.”

The lingering challenges of the “unfinished agenda” of women and girls’ right to formal education as a tool for achieving gender equality are well-documented by international organizations such as UNESCO and the World Bank. What remains less clear is the contributions and challenges of non-formal educational programs in the provision of women and girls’ education. Non-formal education has been widely promoted as a tool for social change and women’s empowerment; yet, as Stromquist (2013) argues, scant attention is given to gender awareness in adult education programs. While reports published by transnational organizations have highlighted the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the provision of adult education programs, “none identify to what extent the participation of women-led NGOs has been taking place.”

The marginalization of women’s adult education in national and international development reports has dire implications for understanding the intersection of education, social change and efforts to promote gender equality. As Monkman and Webster (2014) argue, “the social construction of knowledge is conditioned by education and development policy and by the promotion of certain types of curricula and how they are implemented locally.” Thus, “sensitive” issues and topics, such as sexuality and the gendered nature of legal and human rights are eschewed in national and international education policies and curricula to the detriment of both recognizing gender issues and strategies for gender transformation. I would add here that the construction of

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space for women’s adult education not only neglects “sensitive issues” but neglects important
cultural, economic and religious differences in the discursive construction of what Nüket Kardam
(2004) refers to as a “global gender equality regime.”

Considering the continued rhetorical commitment to women’s adult education by national
governments and trans-national organizations as well as the underexamined role of women-led
CSOs in the construction of women’s non-formal education programs, I sought to identify the
nature of activities as well as the challenges women-led CSOs faced in the course of developing
women and girls’ non-formal education initiatives throughout Turkey. The overarching question for
my project was: What are the experiences of women located in women-led civil society
organizations (CSOs) who have developed and promoted women’s adult education in
Turkey?

To answer this overaching question, I investigated the following research questions:

1. What are the complex and contradictory ways in which women-led CSOs
   seek to organize as alternative, subaltern spaces for women’s education?

2. What are the challenges women experience in developing these alternative,
   subaltern spaces?

3. How has the production of knowledge on adult education been
   conceptualized and in what ways have women’s knowledges not been?

4. How might alternative standpoints on adult education alter how adult
   education spaces are produced?

81 See Appendix B for complete list of interview questions. See Appendix C for Data Matrix that demonstrates
how these research questions align with theoretical framework and methods).
5. What are the [competing] concerns for individuals and groups creating women’s adult education in Turkey?

Research Design and Methods

To answer these questions, I began my research from the locations of twenty-four women-led CSOs that coordinated non-formal education projects for women. By doing this project, I sought to understand what constitutes women’s adult education and their experiences coordinating, implementing and sustaining those program in Turkey from the perspectives of education program coordinators. This study employs a mixed-method approach that included archival research, document (curricula) collection and qualitative interviews completed over the course of approximately two years of in-country fieldwork (August, 2013-June, 2015). I prioritized a reflexive process, where the collection and analysis of data often occurred simultaneously and continually influenced the research design throughout the course of the project.\footnote{Martin Hammersley and Paul Atkinson, \textit{Ethnography: Principles in Practice 2nd Edition}, (London, England: Routledge, 1995), 24.}

Through archival research, I examined the historiographies of women’s rights, women’s movements, CSOs, non-formal and formal education and the intersection of each of these elements in Turkey. Because the histories of each of these elements extends and is influenced by elements of the Ottoman Empire and pre-date the establishment of the Turkish Republic (1923), these histories are briefly mentioned; however, much of the historical data highlighted in this dissertation originates from works published after the establishment of the Turkish Republic. I was also fortunate to receive the fieldnotes and published transcriptions of meetings coordinated by women-led CSOs from a Turkish academic intimately involved with a number of women-led adult education initiatives...
during the early 1990s. These documents were invaluable to understanding historical contexts that shaped women’s non-formal education projects in Turkey and were crucial both to the construction of questions for qualitative interviews and to the development of Chapter Four, the literature review for this project.

Additionally, I conducted twenty-four semi-structured interviews. Twenty-two (twenty in Turkish and two in English) of these interviews were conducted with current program coordinators of education projects organized by women-led CSOs in Turkey while the two remaining interviews (one in Turkish and one in English) were conducted with women who are retired members of CSOs but continue to work on education projects within their organizations. Each interview was conducted at a different civil society organization located in multiple regions throughout Turkey.

Finally, for the purposes of data triangulation and the identification of alternative, subaltern cultural narratives of women’s education, I collected approximately 240 different curricula and textbooks disseminated by women’s CSOs in Turkey. Approximately one half of these texts were collected in the course of conducting interviews at these organizations while the other half were acquired by searching the websites of CSOs I was unable to visit, from archives or from conferences and meetings I attended during my fieldwork. The research methodology and procedure is described more comprehensively in Chapter Three: Methodology.

**Significance of the Study**

While the argument that the field of adult education suffers from androcentricity, or male bias, is certainly not new, the continued marginalization of what constitutes the “relevant content

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and process of knowledge development” in education as a tool for gender transformation demands greater attention in the academic literature on adult education. Although the discussion of issues related to gender have become more common and women-led CSOs have been identified as a crucial site for gender transformative education, few studies have critically examined the experiences of education coordinators and trainers in developing these women’s adult education initiatives in local contexts. Moreover, transnational organizations remain “silent” on the potential of working with women-led non-governmental and civil society organizations. This project seeks to contribute to the academic literature and understanding of how and in what ways women-led CSOs challenge the international community, the state, local actors as well as other women’s groups through the development of non-formal education initiatives.

The responses of education program coordinators provide unique insights into the specific challenges of developing programs to combat violence against women, creating sustainable economic and workforce training programs, acquiring and maintaining safe spaces to execute programs and the implications of using terms like “education” in certain types of gender transformative programs. By learning from the experiences of women education program coordinators, it is my hope that academics and international policy experts will take much more seriously the marginalization of women’s adult education programs as well as how to better promote gender transformative initiatives.

Furthermore, Turkey is an important and unique context in which to examine adult education initiatives located in women-led CSOs for several reasons. First, since the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923, women’s rights and women’s education have been conceptualized as important symbols of progress and “westernization.” Yet, as highlighted in Chapter Four, the top-down approach in which early reforms related to women’s rights were implemented as well as the official policy of secularism in Turkish politics have had complex implications on the evolution of feminism and women’s movements in Turkey. While often critical of the state, over time, women’s organizations have identified the need to work with the state to achieve certain goals, but continue to engage in “uneasy collaboration” with state institutions.88 These persistent challenges, complicated by the current political environment that has arguably been more hostile to women’s movements have exacerbated the problems associated with developing and sustaining non-formal education projects located in women-led CSOs.

By problematizing top-down approaches to women’s adult education, I sought to strengthen the current theorizing on the complex and often conflicting role of non-state actors in understanding the promotion women’s education in Turkey. The concerns expressed by participants in this study lend insight into the potentially damaging effects of promoting top-down institutional approaches to implementing women’s adult education programs. Organizational challenges exist between educational systems, state-run programs, and other institutions. These challenges extend to problems associated with who should be creating educational policies, who is qualified to teach educational materials, what constitutes appropriate educational materials in different contexts, and how— as well as by whom— these programs should be funded. Such problems are further deepened by a growing level of distrust amongst organizations and an unwillingness to cooperate on certain

educational initiatives. By exposing the effects of these anemic relationships on the opportunities and experiences of women, this study serves to inform both international policy and practice of women’s adult education.

Finally, while considerable legal reforms associated with both women’s and human rights have been implemented in Turkey over the last several years, the implementation of those legal reforms as well as the lack of “women’s awareness of what their rights are and the absence of effective means for their enforcement,” has been consistently cited as a challenge that prevents women from not only enjoying these rights and but also in confronting the discrimination they experience in their everyday lives. By starting this project from the experiences of women’s adult education coordinators, I sought to underscore how education, as an often assumed mechanism for the promotion of human rights and as a “site of engagement between state, non-state, and supra-state organizations,” exposes unique challenges or issues concerning gender that are not captured by other mechanisms for promoting women’s human rights.

Overview of the Chapters:

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters. The chief goal of this dissertation project was to offer alternative perspectives on the challenges and potentials of critical pedagogy within the field of adult education. While the argument that the field of adult education is androcentric is certainly not new, women’s experiences continue to be marginalized and excluded from the canon.

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of adult and non-formal education. I sought to provide an-Other\textsuperscript{92} way to consider the challenges and limitations of adult education by prioritizing the multivariety and multilayered experiences of women coordinating these programs in CSOs throughout Turkey. The first three chapters provide an overview of non-formal education, women’s movements and the emergence of women-led CSOs in Turkey. In Chapter 2, I explore the ‘absence’ of research on women’s adult education and argue for the application of a critical theory of space and knowledge production to examine the ways in which women’s histories, organizations and experiences have been marginalized within what I argue is an androcentric canon of adult and non-formal education.

Chapter 3, “Methodology,” outlines the specific qualitative methods and conceptual framework that guided the analysis in Chapters 5-7. My research project was designed in two stages over twenty-two months of in-country fieldwork (August 2013-June 2015), employing an exploratory research strategy. During this time period, I engaged in archival research, which not only informed the literature review (Chapter 4), but also the themes for the qualitative research design of this project. From June, 2014-June, 2015, I conducted 24 semi-structured qualitative interviews with education program coordinators in 24 different women-led CSOs located throughout Turkey. I also collected approximately two-hundred forty different texts and textbooks which were published by the organizations I visited as well as organizations I was unable to visit during my fieldwork. The specific methods employed in this study are discussed in greater detail throughout the chapter.

Chapter 4, “The Emergence of Women-led, CSO-based Education Programs in Turkey,” traces the historical background of women’s movements and education in Turkey. This analysis begin with the Tanzimat reform period and explores the development and challenges for women’s movements and women in both formal and non-formal education institutions through the 21\textsuperscript{st} century.

century. I devote considerable attention in this chapter to the rise of Islamic Women’s Movements and Kurdish Women’s Movements and their unique experiences of marginalization and exclusion, both from the larger society and from Kemalist women’s movements in this section.

Chapters 5-8 offer the analysis and concluding remarks of the current study. During the time in which this study was conducted, gender-based violence and women’s low participation in the labor force were two issues around which almost every organization had both mobilized and developed non-formal education programs. I devoted the first two chapters of analysis to the specific issues women experienced in developing these programs. In Chapter 5, “Critical Reflections on the Limits of Economic Mobility for Women in Job-Skills and Occupational Courses,” I explore both the impact of neoliberal policies on the economy and the gendered welfare state in Turkey, as well as women’s experiences coordinating vocational and job-skills training programs. In Chapter 6, “Swimming Against the Current:” Experiences and Reflections on Implementing Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Turkey,” I examine both the challenges and opposition women experienced interacting with the state in the promotion of programs to combat gender-based violence that had been geared toward both men and women.

Chapter 7, “Women-led Civil Society Organizations as Third Spaces in Adult Education: Reflections on Motivations, Potentials and Challenges,” offers participants’ reflections on the emergence and challenges of coordinating non-formal education programs in women-led CSOs. This chapter focuses on the specific experiences of exclusion and marginalization women highlighted that informed their decision to mobilize within these spaces as well as the challenges, boundaries and limitations of these alternative education spaces. Chapter 8, “Conclusions and Policy Recommendations,” provides concluding remarks on the study, limitations as well as areas, or openings for future research.
A Note on Terminology: Civil Society Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations

Throughout this study, I have chosen to use the term CSOs. Most of the academic literature and international development policies on women’s non-formal and adult educational activities developed by non-state actors uses the term non-governmental organizations (NGOs). While there may be many similarities between NGOs and CSOs, particularly when examining the relevant literature on the challenges and potentials of non-formal education programs and activities, the term ‘NGO’ is a contested term. The contested nature of this term extends to the current study at hand, where some participants did consider themselves NGOs, while others vehemently rejected the term. Because all participants considered their organizations CSOs, I have chosen to use that term to describe the location of educational programs and activities explored throughout this study.

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93 UNDP, *Working with Civil Society in Foreign Aid: Possibilities for South-South Cooperation* (Beijing, China: UNDP, 2013), 123.
Chapter Two:
Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, I argue that the “absence” of research on women’s adult education is actually the active production of women’s knowledges as nonexistent in an androcentric adult education space. To do so, I begin by highlighting Susan L. Robertson’s (2009) call for the application of a critical theory of space in the sociology of adult education. Then, I explore how the space of adult education has been produced within the framework of neoliberal globalization as well as how this contributes to the absence of women’s knowledges. Finally, I highlight Marshall’s (1997) Critical Feminist Policy Analysis and Manicom and Walter’s (2012) Feminist Popular Education as “Pedagogies of Possibility” as frameworks that inform the research design of this study.

Theorizing Space as Socially Produced

Within the field of education, the concept of space has been used to explore geographical sites of learning, such as the classroom, the school and communities of practice. Yet, as Robertson (2006) explains, this limited conceptualization of space in education research is inadequate and “fetishize[s] space” by ignoring the ways in which the social relations of space are imbued with power and politics. Instead, Robertson (2009) calls for studies that prioritize the ontological assumptions of space as socially produced.

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By conceptualizing space as socially produced, it is possible to move away from the examination of space as ‘static’ or as a “backdrop against which social relations take place.”

Through a more critical examination of space as socially produced, social relations can be seen as influencing space in material ways (construction of buildings) and political ways (the production of hegemony through culture and knowledge). Soja (1996) suggests a “trialectic” of lived, perceived and conceived spaces which would transcend the binary of material and political space toward a “Thirdspace” that more closely reflects “space as directly lived, with all its intractability intact.”

Within this framework, where space, time and social relations are connected in complex ways, it is possible to more critically examine the relationships between “the production of space, the making of history and the composition of social relations or society.”

As Doreen Massey (1994) has argued, space is comprised of social relations and “since social relations are imbued with power and meaning, this view of the spatial is as an ever shifting geometry of power and signification” that is dynamic, changing and continually produced and reproduced.

Consequently, space cannot be conceptualized as static or singular, but rather as a “multiplicity of spaces” which are “cross-cutting, intersecting, aligning with one-another, or existing in relations of paradox or antagonism.” By conceptualizing this geometry of space as the outcome of strategies and struggles for power between “multiple histories, multiple entanglements and multiple geographies” we can begin to see how “difference is constituted, and where differences count.”

4 Susan L. Robertson, “Absences and Imaginings,” 306.
8 Doreen Massey, Space Place and Gender, (Cambridge: Polity, 1994), 2.
9 Ibid., 3.
The articulation of space as socially produced and imbued with power lends important insights into establishing a feminist critique of the current literature on the sociology of adult education within the context of globalization. Globalization, particularly that of neo-liberalism, has often been conceptualized as a spaceless, timeless, universal phenomenon that has masked important differences in whose knowledge is becoming globalized and whose is not.\textsuperscript{11} Yet, by examining the literature on adult education within the framework of neoliberal globalization, it becomes much easier to see the diverse histories, entanglements and geographies struggling for power within the multiplicity of spaces that constitute adult education. Moreover, it may be easier to understand how women’s adult education has actively been conceptualized as non-existent, or “as a non-credible alternative”\textsuperscript{12} in the production of a particular adult education space grounded in the assumptions, values and worldview of neoliberal agendas.\textsuperscript{13}

In this project, to expose the social production of the androcentric space of adult education and its implications for women’s adult education, I conceptualize globalization as “a myth, a construction, a discourse.”\textsuperscript{14} This discourse, through “constructing a particular vision of global space and the ‘place’ of individuals” has formed “part of the rhetoric to legitimize certain political strategies” that have marginalized alternative ways of knowing and have masked women’s knowledges.\textsuperscript{15} To demonstrate that globalization, as a myth, construction and discourse, has marginalized alternative forms of knowledge extending to current literature on adult education, it is necessary to briefly outline the dominant literature on globalization as it relates to adult education.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{13} Catherine Marshall, \textit{Feminist Critical Policy Analysis II}, 81.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\end{flushleft}
The Production of an Androcentric Adult Education Space

Over the past seven decades, the term “adult education” has been associated with a number of terms that have been subject to a wide range of interpretations. These terms generally include, but are not limited to, non-formal education, lifelong education, adult learning, adult literacy, lifelong learning and adult education and learning. While there are a number of expressions to describe the field of adult education, Rubenson (2011) argues that the most commonly used definition is UNESCO’s statement of adult education:

The term “adult education” denotes the entire body of organized educational processes, whatever the content, level and method, whether formal or otherwise, whether they prolong or replace initial education in schools, colleges and universities as well as in apprenticeship, whereby persons recognized as adult by the society to which they belong develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge, improve their technical or vocational qualifications or turn them in a new direction and bring about changes in their attitudes or behavior in the twofold perspective of full personal development and participation in balanced and independent social, economic and cultural development.16

The current scope and limitations of adult education policies cannot be adequately understood without an examination of their transformation within the context of globalization.

While economist Theodore Levitt has been credited with coining the term “globalization” in 1985 to highlight changes in global economics that affected investment, production and consumption,17 the concept of globalization, namely political and economic relations at the global scale, have much

16 See Kjell Rubenson, “The Field of Adult Education: An Overview,” in Adult Education and Learning, ed. Kjell Rubenson (Oxford, England: Elsevier, 2011), 3-13; UNESCO, Recommendations on the Development of Adult Education (Paris, France: UNESCO, 1976). The semantic shift from education to learning reflects an ongoing “conceptual and practical tension” regarding the changes in focus from teacher to learner, from formal to non-formal learning as well as the increasing influence of technology within and outside educational institutions. While education is generally seen as more formal and systematic, learning is seen to account for informal and often incidental learning, or that which is often not recognized as learning. See Carlos Alberto Torres, Political Sociology of Adult Education (Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2013), 9; Foley, “Learning in Social Action: A Contribution to Understanding Informal Education,” 3. It is important to note that others have argued that the use of learning as a substitution for education can serve to depoliticize the field, by shifting the focus away from issues such as the role of the state, resources and equity, particularly when dealing with issues of democracy and inequality. See Chris Duke, “Research in Adult Education: Current Trends and Future Agenda,” in World Trends in Adult Education Research, ed. Werner Mauch (Hamburg, Germany: UNESCO Institute of Education, 1999), 7-13.

longer histories, “rooted in colonialism, imperialism and practices of the development industry.”

Recent literature has linked globalization “to the historically-specific (post-1989) hegemony of neoliberal discourse that is reworking nation-state power and the rhetorics and practices of development.” Within this framework, globalization has been defined in terms of global economics, seen as “denoting in a particular way the transformation of capitalism as a mode of production,” the product and consequence of the emergence of a global economy, the development of transnational linkages between economic units, the practices of corporate actors in global financial and trade flows, the erosion of national trade barriers and the rescaling of governance through treaties and the emergence of multi-lateral institutions such the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1944.

Historically guided by modernization and human capital theories, adult education, particularly literacy training, has been identified in literature as an instrumental variable to increase the productivity of a nation’s citizens, to produce a more democratic civic culture, and as a prerequisite for increased per capita income in developed and developing countries. The rise of

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19 Ibid., 258.
21 One of the consequences of neoliberal capitalism has emerged in recent trends that indicate that improved living conditions have been accompanied by increasing wealth disparities. For example, recent reports indicate that the richest eight percent of the world’s population earn half of the world’s income, while the remaining 92 percent of people earn the other half. While the Global North has increasingly been affected by the issues such as increasing unemployment, reduced welfare spending, declining working conditions and the movement of transfer of industrial production to lower cost countries, at the same time conditional development funding programs imposed by multilateral organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank have effectively forced countries of the Global South to follow the neoliberal path to industrialization. See Manuel Castells, *End of Millennium*, (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2010); Branko Milanovic, “Global Income Inequality by the Numbers: In History and Now—An Overview,” *World Bank Working Paper* 6259 (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2012); Ankie Hoogvelt, *Globalization and the Postcolonial World: The New Political Economy of Development* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).
neoliberalism has brought with it a “new common sense in education” driven by privatization, decentralization and accountability which extends to the education and training of adults, where top-down educational models pervade the institutional logic of organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank. While the administration, management and governance of adult education has generally been within the purview of the state, Resnik (2006) demonstrates how voluntary participation in intergovernmental organizations, such as the OECD, taught governments how to see the relationship between the economy and education as one of investment in human capital for economic growth instead of as a social service. The existence of such an institutional logic may suggest the existence of a universal, globally structured educational agenda influenced and set by trans-national organizations, where “at the dawn of the 21st century, education and training of all kinds has become one of the prime movers of development.”

Reports on adult education seem to reflect this agenda, as the key functions of adult education continue to be defined in terms of a broader conversation related to economic and political development and where adult education is seen to provide the opportunity for individuals to enhance their knowledge and skills, participate in a global environment of fast-paced

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technological advancements, secure employment and benefit from economic development. Proponents of neoliberal frameworks optimistically assume that the westernization of globalization leads to improved economic welfare and democracy, and are, consequently, universal, desirable and would result in a more harmonious world. By associating education both with economic progress and something that is universally desirable, transnational actors such as the IMF, the OECD and the World Bank have advanced a neoliberal development agenda by promoting funding for education projects as a tool of development aid.

Critics argue that situating adult education (as a tool to meet the technical-rational demands of global capitalism) within the dominant neoliberal discourse that equates development with economic progress masks the potential it has for furthering a more socially just development. In an effort to broaden the limited scope of adult education, alternative paradigms, particularly that of popular education, have sought to redress the social injustices exacerbated by globalization, neoliberal capitalism and top-down approaches to modernization by focusing on the transformative and emancipatory dimensions of adult education. Grounded in the works of Paulo Freire and conceptualized as “mechanisms for the political and pedagogical empowerment of subordinate

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social sectors.” Popular education recognizes the political nature of all educational interventions and initiatives. Such a model is guided by a “language of critique,” which analyzes the systemic and structural forms of hegemony. Through collective and individual identification and consciousness of social problems, popular education seeks to challenge established structures, often through critiquing state programs or compensating for the inadequacies (or nonexistence) of programs in marginalized communities. Considering its focus on the needs of poor and marginalized communities, popular education has been often linked to social movements and civil society actors. Extensive research has been conducted on the specific types of educational activity present in social movements. Those actively involved in social movements have often considered education as a critical element of social change and as “an instrument of power which shapes knowledge within social movements.”

Despite the breadth of literature on the potential of popular education to both broaden the scope of adult education and to capture the interests of socially, politically and economically marginalized communities, recent trends suggest that adult education has “lost its transformative and empowering vision and mission.” One of the reasons for this trend is that adult education is

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32 Torres, “Political Sociology of Adult Education,” 17.
generally implemented by and considered within the scope of education policies of national
governments.\textsuperscript{39} Evidence suggests that adult education policies are not, and historically have not
been, a priority for most national governments.\textsuperscript{40} Despite indications that there are public benefits to
adult education, there is skepticism in many countries regarding both the role of adult education and
its importance as a matter of interest for public policy. For example, Desjardins (2013) argues that
countries such as the Czech Republic, Kyrgyzstan and Poland do not view adult education as a
public good.\textsuperscript{41}

Furthermore, adult education is widely considered to be the least prestigious of educational
initiatives, due to its diverse clientele, which has historically been poor, marginalized from formal
schooling structures and politically under-represented.\textsuperscript{42} Compounded by increased demands to
expand access to primary and secondary education, there is enormous pressure on governments to
limit public investment of adult education.\textsuperscript{43} While financial investment in adult education varies
greatly amongst countries, research indicates that national governments currently spend
approximately one percent of their public education budgets on adult education and trends suggest
that this percentage is decreasing.\textsuperscript{44}

Moreover, despite extant literature related to the rise of a global civil society as a single,
unitary actor and the decline of the nation-state as a consequence of globalization,\textsuperscript{45} nation-states

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid., 21.
\item Robert F. Arno\textsuperscript{v}e and Carlos Alberto Torres, “Adult Education and State Policy in Latin America: The
Contrasting Cases of Mexico and Nicaragua. \textit{Comparative Education} 31, no. 3 (1995): 311-325; Torres, “Political Sociology
of Adult Education,” 21.
\item Richard Desjardins, “The Economics of Adult Education,” in \textit{Adult Education and Learning in a Precarious Age: The
Hamburg Declaration Revisited}, eds. Tom Nesbit and Michael Welton (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Summer 2013),
83.
\item Carlos Alberto Torres, “Dancing on the Desk of the Titanic? Adult Education, the Nation-State, and New Social
\item UNESCO, \textit{Education For All by 2015, Will we Make It? EFA Global Monitoring Report} (Paris, France: UNESCO,
2008).
\item David Archer, “Financing of Adult Education,” \textit{Convergence} 40, no. 3-4 (2007): 253-257. It is important to
note that as Desjardins (2013) suggests, it is difficult to examine investment trends in adult education since “systematic
accounting of adult education expenditures does not exist.” See Richard Desjardins, “The Economics of Adult
Education,” 83.
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continue to have a fundamental role in the “possibilities of national and international governance.”

As many have argued, the process of internationalization has strengthened the importance of the nation-state as it integrates the multiplicity of authority and governing powers (non-state, national and international institutions) and serves as a mediating structure where power is distributed upwards toward international bodies and downward toward sub-national agencies. Indeed, the rhetoric that “globalization starts at home,” discursively places home in a national context, reflecting the continued importance attributed to national governments in the development and articulation of adult education policies. Keogh (2009) summarizes these tensions of the global-local and local-local within the current context of globalization as they relate to adult education and adult learning education policies (ALE):

Because adult learning education policies and practices are essentially national, a wide range of factors contribute to the condition of ALE in any country including: the prevailing socio-political culture comprising beliefs and values about the role of the state in general and in relation to education and training in particular; prevailing views on the function of education and training—in this, case ALE—in relation to the social, cultural, political and economic goals and priorities of a country; the dominant views on the optimal balance of power, roles and activity between the three major social institutions, state market and civil society; the systems of ALE governance in operation, including the role of the social partners; the level of economic development and the level of investment in education and training.

Finally, social movements and civil society actors, who are generally credited with the work of more radical or popular forms of education methods and are generally outside the purview of governmental institutions, are seen as more difficult to control or as potentially posing a threat to

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47 Helen Keogh, The State and Development of Adult Learning and Education in Europe, North America and Israel: Regional Synthesis Report, (Hamburg, Germany: UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2009), 54.
the status quo.48 Civil society actors have only recently emerged in academic literature as an important location of practice of adult education for social change.49 Despite the important role they are perceived to play in the provision of adult education, there is little systematic information locating or tracking their contributions or the investments made by non-governmental organizations.50 Although civil society actors, particularly non-governmental organizations have received greater attention for their role in the provision of non-formal educational services, at the same time, these actors have been seen as “flexible collaborators,”51 having a peripheral role to educational activities of the state.52

Returning to the notion of globalization as a discourse, the literature related to globalization and adult education underscores the construction of a particular vision of global space rooted in neoliberal capitalism, economic growth and political development. Multiple actors at multiple social levels, including trans-national, national, community and individual, are complicit in the creation of a rhetoric that legitimizes education as a tool and political strategy to meet the technical-rational demands of global capitalism. These strategies are not only used to prioritize formal education over adult education but also to perpetuate a singular vision of adult education as an institution whose raison d’être is a skills-based education that contributes to capitalist productivity. While these strategies are advantaged, the social aspects of education and the need for a collective consciousness around social problems are marginalized.

50 Ibid., 12-14; Richard Dejardins, “The Economics of Adult Education,” 84.
As others have asserted, I argue here that the dominant research and discourses on globalization are imbued with masculinist and heteronormative bias that “serve to construct the space, scales and subjects of globalization in particular ways.” Adult education, rooted in this neoliberal framework of globalization, is “part of hegemonic discourses, which are classed and racialized, as well as gendered” and its policies are “often used more as an agent of social control than an agent for change and transformative action.” Yet, if we were to conceptualize the constitution of both globalization and adult education as a socially produced, “multiplicity of spaces,” that is the outcome of strategies and struggles for power between “multiple histories, multiple entanglements and multiple geographies,” we may be able to see the myriad ways in which “difference is constituted” by examining whose knowledge is being globalized and whose is not.

Guided by this conceptualization of globalization and adult education, I ask: How is gender constituted within these spaces? What discourses have entered the lexicon of adult education and which have been neglected? How has the production of knowledge on adult education been globalized and in what ways has women’s knowledge(s) not been? How are understandings and analysis of adult education within the context of globalization diminished as a result of this neglect? Perhaps most importantly, how might alternative standpoints on adult education alter how adult education spaces are produced? Answering these questions requires exposing the heteronormative biases of dominant discourses on globalization, neoliberal capitalism and adult education. By doing

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56 Ibid., 10.
57 The structuring of this particular question is borrowed from Nagar et al. (2002) questions regarding the structuring of feminist economics of globalization. See Nagar et al., “Locating Globalization,” 258.
so, we can begin to examine the multiple, intersecting ways in which adult education policies are part and parcel of the discursive production of globalization have reproduced political, economic and social conditions that have controlled and limited the scope of adult education to the detriment of women and girls.

The Marginalization of Women’s Adult Education

As previously noted, the function of adult education has been conceptualized as a form of skills training that allows individuals to meet the technical-rational demands of global capitalism. Critics of this framework have challenged the dominant view of adult education as an instrumental tool for economic development; however, few have examined how contemporary globalization, centered on economic development, “is intimately tied to gendered and racialized systems of oppression.” While scholars have sought to research the intersections between critical development studies and the discourse on globalization and transnationalism, the consideration of gender and development as well as its consequences on adult education policy frameworks, continues to be largely neglected. As Afshar and Barrientos (1999) maintain:

The impact of globalization on women has often been complex and contradictory, both in terms of their “inclusion” and “exclusion.” To be understood it needs to be analyzed not only at the global but also at the local and household levels. Feminists have been disaggregating the specificities of women’s experiences in the context of the global process,

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60 Nagar et al., “Locating Globalization,” 263.


but this work has yet to find its way into much of the core debate over globalization.\(^{63}\)

Feminist research has sought to remedy this dearth of knowledge on the gendered consequences of neoliberal globalization by arguing that the historical model for international development within the current discourse of globalization is deeply flawed, due to the economic reductionism inherent in development policies.\(^{64}\) Historically, “top-down” institutional approaches to international development, which equate economic development to national development, have effectively ignored the root causes of gender disparities as well as the mechanisms for agency within such a development framework.\(^{65}\)

Moreover, the examination of intersectionality (how different systems of oppression, such as race, class, gender and sexual orientation) affect individuals differently, is not only masked by a “capitalist myopia” that constructs globalization as “capitalist, western-centric and the only possible future for the ‘global economy,’”\(^{66}\) but also through the execution of neoliberal, top-down models of globalization. As Mohanty (2012) argues, “globalization has come to represent the interests of corporations and the free market rather than self-determination and freedom from political, cultural and economic domination for all the world’s peoples.”\(^{67}\) The cultural homogenization\(^{68}\) assumed by neoliberal approaches neglects the intense stratification that occurs within and between societies, subsuming cultural, political and social differences despite the knowledge that the responses and

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\(^{66}\) Nagar et al., “Locating Globalization,” 263.


effects of globalization can differ vastly based on these factors. As Walters and Cooper (2011) argue, despite the increasing literature on the relationship between global knowledge economy and learning organizations as well as its effects on the development of new forms of knowledge and informal learning, the reality is that much of this new knowledge has been rendered invisible, reifying the political and economic dominance of the European core over the rest of the world.

These criticisms extend to the analysis of gender within neoliberal approaches to development, where feminist scholars have exposed the western feminist bias embedded in development work. These scholars have denounced the tendency to “uncritically” transfer western feminist models as an act that not only ignores the multiplicity of ways in which gender impacts women differently in social and political contexts, but has also resulted in “lapses into foundationalism and essentialism in (western) feminist texts on “Third World” women.”

The consequences of uncritically transferring western feminist epistemologies is astutely articulated in Lila Abu-Lughod’s (2013) analysis of the politics of the veil, where she argues the act of veiling has often been misrepresented as a form of oppression, or the “quintessential sign of women’s unfreedom.” However, as Abu-Lughod suggests, a more nuanced examination of the politics of the veil reveals that there are multiple reasons that inform the choices of “women of

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cover,” none of which have anything to do with a lack of agency or freedom.\textsuperscript{75} It is insufficient to focus solely on gender and the public sphere; she asks feminist researchers to begin to examine the politics of culture in addition to race, class, and gender and to avoid the presumption that cultural norms regarding agency are universal.\textsuperscript{76} She explains:

What does freedom mean if we accept the fundamental premise that humans are social beings, raised in certain social and historical contexts and belonging to particular communities that shape their desires and understandings of the world? Is it not a gross violation of women’s own understandings of what they are doing to simply denounce the burqa as a medieval imposition? One cannot reduce the diverse situations and attitudes of millions of Muslim women to a single item of clothing. And we should not underestimate the ways that veiling has entered political contests across the world.\textsuperscript{77}

Additionally, Nüket Kardam (2011) argues that neoliberal approaches used in the global promotion of women’s human rights have failed to account for “how gender norms and identities are constructed, contested, and reconstructed in historical and socio-political contexts.”\textsuperscript{78} Framing women as universally exploited, passive recipients of neoliberal policies ignores that power has both constraining and enabling effects and has been used as an “aspect of agency,”\textsuperscript{79} by women activists in challenging state and international actors.\textsuperscript{80} Instead, Kardam calls for approaches that prioritize the ways in which “the interpretation of vague and general global norms and principles” is reinterpreted, contested and owned at the local levels, as well as how gender might be reconstructed in light of competing norms.\textsuperscript{81}

The challenges of exposing the invisibility of women’s experiences in the core debates over

\textsuperscript{76} Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? 91-94.
\textsuperscript{77} Lila Abu-Lughod, \textit{Do Muslim Women Need Saving?} 40.
\textsuperscript{79} Nüket Kardam, “The Emerging Global Gender Equality Regime from Neoliberal and Constructivist Perspectives in International Relations,” 97-99.
\textsuperscript{81} Nüket Kardam, “The Emerging Global Gender Equality Regime from Neoliberal and Constructivist Perspectives in International Relations,” 97-99.
globalization extend to the “geopolitics of sameness” embedded in the discourse of adult education policies. Through their research, feminists have contributed to an important deconstruction of the gendered implications of neoliberal globalization. However, far less is known about women’s experiences of developing adult education programs and how these experiences may contribute to a deconstruction of the gendered implications of promoting adult education within a neoliberal framework of globalization.

Despite the promotion of women’s education as integral to development, research in the field of adult education lacks a critical examination of how education policies have both “failed to effect structural change” in the gender relations and “have actually served to perpetuate existing systems of social, economic and political stratification” for women and girls. The “brands” of participatory methodologies and “gender-training” promoted by transnational agencies, continue to focus on formulaic, quantifiable, top-down quick-fixes applied to, rather than translated in specific contexts which render invisible any activities that do not align with more neoliberal approaches to education and development. While the arguments that education is a gendered institution and that androcentrism pervades the literature of adult education are not new, trans-national organizations, such as the World Bank, have failed to articulate schools and education as such, thus ignoring the “educational content and the education experience that reproduce gender ideologies and

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hierarchies.”

Sue Blundell (1992) argues that the contradictions between the rhetorical promotion of women’s adult education and the reality of women’s education may be explained by the current constitution of adult education, which has “very little to offer” to the liberation of women. She offers two reasons for this dilemma: First, she argues that adult education, as it is currently constituted, continues to reinforce women’s roles as domestic through both the content and types of educational opportunities afforded to them. Second, she explains that while there is an assumption that adult education curricula are “gender-blind,” they are “profoundly male-centered” in their construction, control and transmission.

Examining the “politics of knowledge production” embedded in the constitution of adult education as “profoundly male-centered” may serve to clarify how certain discourses related to women have entered the lexicon of adult education while others have been neglected. It may also shed light on the interests that underlie the structures and agents involved in the articulation of a “social consensus about the meanings of truth.” The politics of knowledge production and the paradox of promoting women’s adult education can perhaps best be understood through an examination of the divergence inherent in existing discourses on adult education. Nelly P. Stromquist (2013), in her recent article entitled, “Adult Education of Women for Social Transformation: Reviving the Promise, Continuing the Struggle,” compares the objectives of the final documents of CONFITEA V (the Hamburg Declaration, 1997) and VI (the Belem Framework

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89 Ibid., 199-201.
for Action, 2009), suggesting that from a gender perspective, the two conferences “stand in direct contrast to each other,” whereby the more recent CONFITEA VI “does not advance the education of women.” 92 To make clear the differences between the two CONFITEA documents, Stromquist includes Theme 4 of the Hamburg Declaration in its entirety, which is also worth including here. The extensive list of strategies prioritize women’s education in a distinctly political context where “the conditions of women are embedded within the wider and stronger principle of human rights:” 93

We commit ourselves to promoting the empowerment of women and gender equity through adult learning:

(a) by recognizing and correcting the continued marginalization and denial of access and of equal opportunities for quality education that girls and women are still facing at all levels;
(b) by ensuring that all women and men are provided with the necessary education to meet their basic needs and to exercise their human rights;
(c) by raising the consciousness of girls and boys, women and men concerning gender inequalities and the need to change these unequal relations;
(d) by eliminating gender disparities in access to all areas and levels of education;
(e) by ensuring that policies and practices comply with the principle of equitable representation of both sexes, especially at the managerial and decision-making level of educational programmes;
(f) by combating domestic and sexual violence through providing appropriate education for men and supplying information and counselling to increase women’s ability to protect themselves from such violence;
(g) by removing barriers to access to formal and non-formal education in the case of pregnant adolescents and young mothers;
(h) by promoting a gender-sensitive participatory pedagogy which acknowledges the daily life experience of women and recognizes both cognitive and affective outcomes;
(i) by educating men and women to acknowledge the serious and adverse impacts of globalization and structural adjustment policies in all parts of the world, especially upon women;
(j) by taking adequate legislative, financial and economic measures and by implementing social policies to ensure women’s successful participation in adult education through the removal of obstacles and the provision of supportive learning environments;
(k) by educating women and men in such a way as to promote a collective identity and to create women’s organizations to bring about change;

92 Nelly P. Stromquist, “Adult Education of Women for Social Transformation: Reviving the Promise, Continuing the Struggle,” 31, 36-37.
93 Ibid., 32.
by promoting women’s participation in decision-making processes in formal structures.\(^{94}\)

However, as Stromquist argues, the *Belem Framework for Action*, which emerged as the final document of CONFITAE VI (2009), proposes vague recommendations which fail to identify specific problems that women face.\(^{95}\) Rather than providing themes for action, as the previous document did, the *Belem Framework for Action* offers “recommendations” which mention equity and inclusion but do not make reference to the specific challenges women face.\(^{96}\) Specific reference to women is only made six times in the document and as Stromquist suggests, women’s empowerment is referenced once.\(^{97}\) The two articles that make reference to “gender-sensitive provisions” are also worth noting, to highlight the rhetorical differences between the *Hamburg Declaration* and the *Belem Framework for Action*:

(9) There has been some convincing evidence and increased recognition among Member States of the benefits of gender-sensitive provision in adult learning and education, particularly with respect to women. Information and communications technologies and open and distance learning are being embraced and are slowly responding to the specific needs of learners who up to very recently have been excluded. Mother-tongue learning is addressed increasingly in national policies in multilingual and multicultural contexts, although comprehensive policies are in place only in some of them.

(15) Although we are witnessing an increasing variety of adult learning and education programmes, the primary focus of such provision is now on vocational and professional education and training. More integrated approaches to adult learning and education to address development in all its aspects (economic, sustainable, community and personal) are missing. Gender mainstreaming initiatives have not always led to more relevant programmes for or greater participation by women. Similarly, adult learning and education programmes are rarely responsive to indigenous people, rural populations and migrants. The diversity of learners, in terms of age, gender, cultural background, economic status, unique needs, including disabilities, and language, is not reflected in programme content and practices. Few countries have consistent multilingual policies promoting mother tongues, yet this is often

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\(^{95}\) Nelly P. Stromquist, “Adult Education of Women for Social Transformation,” 31.

\(^{96}\) Ibid., 32.

\(^{97}\) Ibid., 8.
crucial for creating a literate environment, especially for indigenous and/or minority languages.\textsuperscript{98}

These discourses, as articulated by trans-national organizations such as UNESCO, highlight the social struggle and antagonism inherent in the move to include women and gender in the lexicon of adult education. Yet, the neglect of certain discourses extends beyond the promotion of women’s adult education to the scope of activities that are recognized as educational. Previous research has underscored the role of civil society actors in the contestation of neoliberal development agendas through educational programs and initiatives.\textsuperscript{99} It has also conceptualized these actors as agents of resistance to neoliberal globalisation through the development of local educational programs and initiatives for marginalized and disadvantaged groups,\textsuperscript{100} and has underscored the ways in which social movements and civil society actors have the potential to challenge neoliberalism through popular education.\textsuperscript{101} Yet, the contributions of women-led civil society organizations (CSOs) and feminist research in challenging the marginalization of women’s education continue to receive scant attention in this literature.\textsuperscript{102}

Since “women are the most likely advocates for their own advancement,”\textsuperscript{103} researchers have begun to highlight women-led CSOs as one of the few spaces where adult education that seeks to transform gendered social relations could occur.\textsuperscript{104} Previous studies have suggested that women-led CSOs can be important sites of gender-transformative educational initiatives by encouraging both

\textsuperscript{101} Carlos Alberto Torres, “Dancing on the Deck of the Titanic?” 39-56.
\textsuperscript{103} Nelly P. Stromquist, “Adult Education of Women for Social Transformation,” 35.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
the identity formation and collective mobilization necessary for redressing women’s conditions.105 Because women’s concerns and issues of gender equality have historically been excluded from centers of power or, at best, have reluctantly been accepted into national policies,106 civil society organizations have often served as “subaltern counterpublics…that are parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses.”107 These sites may play an important role by creating “an alternative space”108 to the current structure of educational activities, which allow individuals to mobilize and collectively pressure trans-national and state actors to improve gendered social relations.109

However, the literature on adult education programs located in women-led CSOs continues to be marginalized within the already “stagnant, sleepy” and underfunded policies of adult education.110 In their examination of a recent USAID report on gender and education, Lorelei Brush et al. (2002) expose this marginalization by showing that while the report recommends the establishment of partnerships with various non-state institutions, such as religious groups and mass media, the publication is “silent” about the potential for working with civil society groups such as women-led CSOs.111

110 Ibid., 37.
The current project seeks to contribute to an understanding of the challenges and potential of promoting women’s adult education in women-led CSOs. I had three goals for this project: First, I sought to expose and critique the power relations that underlie the production and consumption of discourses related to women’s adult education. Second, I hoped to identify the complex and contradictory ways in which women-led CSOs seek to organize as alternative, subaltern spaces for women’s education as well as the challenges they experience in developing education initiatives that seek to transform gendered social relations in Turkey. Third, by collecting the curricula of women-led CSOs, my goal was to identify what these programs perceived as transformative knowledge for social change.

My study borrows from Robertson’s six, central propositions to studying the sociology of education from a critical spatial analytic. To these propositions, I add my own arguments (italicized) that underlie the execution of this project, but which may extend to other projects that theorize a more critical analysis of space as integral to the sociology of education and gender:

1. Social relations are both gendered\textsuperscript{112} and latent in space and reproduced through systems such as education;

2. Education spaces are a product of gendered social relations and histories of marginalizing women’s experiences;\textsuperscript{113}

3. Education spaces are produced by practices and organizational processes that are seen as gender-explicit and seemingly gender-neutral in their application.\textsuperscript{114}


4. Education spaces are polymorphic but differences have been subsumed by the universalizing discourse of neoliberalism;¹¹⁵

5. Education spaces are dynamic geometries of power and social relations where women’s differences must be recognized, including the intersecting dynamics of race, class, disability, ethnicity, religion, historicity and culture;¹¹⁶ and

6. Education spaces and subjectivities are the outcome of a dialectical interaction but have been disguised as neutral, objective, apolitical, abistorical and inclusive.¹¹⁷

Methodological Frameworks

Critical Feminist Policy Analysis

Critical Feminist Policy Analysis is a framework that draws from critical theory and feminism to interrogate traditional, androcentric approaches to mainstream policy analysis.¹¹⁸ Because traditional theoretical frameworks for examining policies have been developed by those in power, namely, individuals who are white, male and educated, policy analysis research has historically reflected the assumptions, values and worldview of this particular group.¹¹⁹ In articulating the androcentrism inherent in conventional policy analyses, Catherine Marshall (1997) explains: “Even though gender may appear to be irrelevant, ultimately the decisions that emerge from such studies do have gendered consequences.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Ibid.
¹²⁰ Ibid., 6.
The goals of a critical feminist policy analysis are twofold:

1) To critique or deconstruct conventional theories and explanations and reveal the gender biases (as well as racial, sexual, social class biases) inherent in commonly accepted theories, constructs, methodologies and concepts; and

2) To conduct analysis that is feminist both in its theoretical and methodologies orientations.¹²¹

My study borrows from the Marshall’s¹²² (1997) five elements for conducting a critical feminist policy analysis:

1. *Poses Gender as a Fundamental Category of Investigation:* Harding explains that “gender is a fundamental category within which meaning and value are assigned to everything in the world, a way of organizing human social relations.”¹²³ A critical feminist policy analysis brings to light the gendering of “gender-explicit and gender-neutral practices” and organizational processes which occur within and amongst institutions.¹²⁴

2. *Concerns the Analysis of Differences, Local Context and Specificity:* In order for women to have a subject status equal to men, their differences must be recognized.¹²⁵ These differences include intersecting the dynamics of race, class, disability, ethnicity, religion and historicity.¹²⁶

3. *The Data is from the Lived Experiences of Women:* Critical feminism policy analysis generates its problematic from women’s lived experiences. Using standpoint methodologies,¹²⁷ women’s experiences not only ground the investigation of the analysis but also serve as a “significant indicator of the reality against which hypotheses are tested.”¹²⁸

4. *The Goal is to Transform Institutions:* Unlike conventional policy reforms, which conceptualize discrimination solely in terms of the exclusion of women from institutions and remedies as merely adding women to current institutional structures, a critical feminist policy analysis problematizes taken-for-granted structures within institutions to change and transform the institutions themselves.¹²⁹

¹²² Ibid.
¹²³ Sandra Harding, The Science Question in Feminism, 57.
¹²⁵ Ibid.
¹²⁶ Michele Barrett and Anne Phillips, Destabilizing Theory.
5. **Employs an Interventionist Strategy**: Unlike traditional policy analyses that have been historically disguised as neutral, objective, apolitical, and inclusive, a critical feminist policy analysis is openly “political and change-oriented.”\(^{130}\) It seeks to not only highlight the androcentric and limiting scope of traditional policy analyses but also to create new policies which dismantle patriarchal institutional practices, rendering them unable to function.

In this project, I drew from these five themes by situating my examination of adult education policies and practices within the experiences of education program coordinators located in women-led CSOs. In doing so, my analysis focuses on concerns of difference and context to not only challenge the notion that there is a “singular perspective on gender”\(^{131}\) in transnational adult education policy, but also the assumption that there may be a singular perspective on gender in adult education policy in Turkey. Rather, I sought to critically examine the contexts in which adult education policies continue to marginalize women, in what ways they do not, and in what ways women have been marginalized as cultural, religious or social others within Turkey. In using this framework, I sought to develop questions that allowed participants to discuss their concerns and what they believe would be necessary to reproduce the space of adult education policies in a manner that transforms gender social relations in their local communities, at the national level and internationally. It is my hope that this research may serve as a tool to both highlight and dismantle patriarchal institutional practices that limit the scope and potential of research, practice and policies on adult education.

*Feminist Popular Education as “Pedagogies of Possibility”*\(^{132}\)

In addition to employing Critical Feminist Policy Analysis as a framework, I drew from transnational conceptualizations of feminist popular education as “place-based pedagogies of

\(^{132}\) Linzi Manicom and Shirley Walters, *Feminist Popular Education in Transnational Debates.*
possibility.” Because knowledge is not discovered, but produced, it can be reproduced and retranslated in different pedagogical sites to manage complex histories and relations of power. Feminist popular education underscores the need to better understand the processes and spaces of learning by which autonomy is expanded, agency can be claimed and collective action can occur. Linzi Manicom and Shirley Walters (2012) suggest a “double meaning” for the term “pedagogies of possibility.” The first underscores a “grounded and pragmatic assessment of what is feasible given the parameters of place, time in resources.” The second concerns the possibility embedded in feminist popular education, by focusing on that which is to be imagined or that which may “become thinkable and actionable when prevailing relations of power are made visible, when understandings shake loose from normative perspectives and generate new knowledge and possibilities for engagement.” Grounded in the spirit of Freire’s work, scholars of feminist popular education have critically examined issues of transferability, assessing the viability and validity of “transferring pedagogical practices across different cultural and political contexts.” There is a great deal to learn about “the situated politics of feminism” by examining the ways in which popular education has been deconstructed, retranslated, renewed and constructed in different cultural, political, regional and economic contexts.

The literature on feminist popular education as pedagogies of possibility and the concern over transferability provided crucial insights for my project. As highlighted throughout this chapter, women’s issues have been marginalized in the academic literature on both globalization and adult education policies. In designing this project, I continually asked: Who are the various actors

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133 Linzi Manicom and Shirley Walters, Feminist Popular Education in Transnational Debates, 2.
134 Ibid., 2-4.
135 Ibid., 2-4.
136 Ibid., 3.
137 Ibid., 4.
138 Ibid., 8.
139 Ibid., 8.
involved in the construction and deconstruction of a feminist popular education in Turkey? What might different conceptualizations of social change look like in different cultural and political places and spaces and how might that affect the methodologies used to foster “self-reflective and collective” practice? It is important to note that not all of the participants considered their work within the framework of “feminism” or “popular education.” These differences, as well as their implications for articulating feminist popular education(s) within the academic literature on adult education, will be explored in later chapters.

Furthermore, I was interested in highlighting the multitude of actors involved in both the promotion and marginalization of women’s education. As Ellsworth (2005) suggests, the learning self is continuously “invented in and through its engagement with pedagogy’s force. The self emerges along with the new concepts that its participation in a particular pedagogy helps to create and the new challenges that its participation helps to pose.”

Building off of Ellsworth’s concept of the learning self and its engagement with particular pedagogies, I sought to expose not only how political interests of state and transnational actors have affected the development and sustainability of these programs, but also how, at times, women CSOs, through attempts at transferring particular pedagogical practices are also complicit in legitimizing certain types of education while marginalizing others. Each of these actors is neither separate nor autonomous, but interconnected and interdependent in a set of power relations that contribute to the constitution of women’s adult education.

Both Marshall’s (1997) Critical Feminist Policy Analysis and Manicom and Walter’s (2012) feminist popular education as “pedagogies of possibility” informed the research design for this project which will be discussed further in Chapter Three: Methodology.

Chapter Three:

Methodology

Guided by the theoretical frameworks highlighted in Chapter Two, my study examines the field of adult education from an overtly political and feminist position. In order to understand how and in what ways women-led civil society organizations (CSOs) are attempting to resist, negotiate and transform a range of gendered social relations through non-formal education initiatives in Turkey, the methodology of my project starts from the perspective of women’s lives.1 By prioritizing the knowledge and experiences of women who worked as non-formal education program coordinators, I sought to expose how their experiences have been traditionally excluded by the “knowledge production and subsequent practices of power”2 of an androcentric canon of adult education and to contribute to the growing body of studies that dismantle the hegemonic practices of knowledge production within the fields of globalization and adult education.

In this chapter, I outline the major components of my research design. First, I describe the research settings where the project was situated. Second, the three phrases of my research design are presented as well as how the combination of these strategies provided the most effective methods


2 Sandra Harding, “Introduction.”
for exploring women’s adult education programs in Turkey. Third, I discuss the methods employed to analyze the data I collected. Finally, I highlight the limitations of this study.

Research Setting

The setting for my research was twenty-two women-led CSOs located throughout Turkey. Each organization was identified as having at least one non-formal education program for women or for girls (with some offering both). The participating CSOs were located in five cities, including Ankara, Bursa, Diyarbakir, Istanbul and Van. Of the selected CSOs located in Ankara and Istanbul, roughly half of the participants of each city were located in the urban center while the other half were located outside of the urban center in neighborhoods with a lower socioeconomic status. Many of the organizations located in the metropolitan centers of Ankara and Istanbul had programs that were located in multiple regions throughout Turkey.

Research Design

My research project was designed in two stages over twenty-two months of in-country fieldwork (August, 2013-June 2015), employing an exploratory research strategy. While interviews with education coordinators were the main focus of this project, I sought to identify sources in addition to the interview material that would help me to gain a better understanding of the relationship between individual experiences and social context. With these goals in mind, I embarked on the first stage of research, which included archival research and the collection of non-

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4 Ibid.
archived sources in Ankara and Istanbul from August, 2013-June, 2014. Conducting archival research was essential to both identifying relevant themes for the qualitative research design of the second stage of my dissertation fieldwork and understanding the diversity of women’s education programs located in CSOs throughout Turkey. The second stage of my project ran from June, 2014-June, 2015 and included 24 semi-structured interviews with coordinators of women’s education projects located in CSOs throughout Turkey.5

Throughout both stages of fieldwork, I collected curricula and textbooks used by women-led CSOs for women’s education programs. In total, I collected approximately two-hundred forty different texts and textbooks which were published by organizations I visited as well as organizations I was unable to visit during my fieldwork. Using these texts, I employed a process of triangulation: collecting information related to women’s adult education in Turkey from a diverse range of individuals and settings, including archives, curricula and interviews.6 My use of triangulation was not for the purpose of validity-testing, as is often the case in qualitative research,7 but rather to increase the diversity of responses and concepts that emerged in the course of this project. Through triangulation, I sought to understand the diversity of strategies that communities employed to manage the coordination of women’s adult education throughout Turkey. This section will outline the research questions associated with my project, the conceptual model which guided

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5 The design of this project is greatly informed by the discussions of Crouch and McKenzie (2006) on the “logic of small samples in interview-based qualitative research.” While I identify the manner in which participants were selected for this project, my focus was on individuals who were involved in a “particular social setting,” or, women’s adult education projects located in civil society organizations. Consequently, I identified participants as embodying important experience-structure links within this particular social environment and my goal was to encourage reflection on rather than reporting of, their experience within that environment. See Mira Crouch and Heather McKenzie, “The Logic of Small Samples in Interview-Based Qualitative Research,” 483-499.


the research design as well as the specific steps of the mixed-method approach used to answer my research questions.

**Research Questions**

The overarching question for my project was: **What are the experiences of women located in women-led civil society organizations (CSOs) who have developed and promoted women’s adult education in Turkey?**

To answer this overarching question, I investigated the following research questions:

1. What are the complex and contradictory ways in which women-led CSOs seek to organize as alternative, subaltern spaces for women’s education?
2. What are the challenges women experience in developing these alternative, subaltern spaces?
3. How has the production of knowledge on adult education been conceptualized and in what ways have women’s knowledges not been?
4. How might alternative standpoints on adult education alter how adult education spaces are produced?
5. What are the [competing] concerns for individuals and groups creating women’s adult education in Turkey?

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8 See Appendix B for complete list of interview questions. See Appendix C for Data Matrix that demonstrates how these research questions align with theoretical framework and methods)
Data Collection

To answer these research questions, and considering the limited research on the topic of women’s adult education programs, particularly programs located in CSOs, I employed a mixed-method approach that included archival research, document (curricula) collection and qualitative interviews. I prioritized a reflexive process, where the collection and analysis of data often occurred simultaneously and continually influenced the research design throughout the course of the project. Figure 1 demonstrates how each of these methods contributed to understanding the experiences of women’s adult education program coordinators located in women-led CSOs.

![Diagram showing the relationship between archival research, qualitative interviews, and curricula collection]

Figure 1: Conceptual model of methods used for data collection. Triangulation of sources of data are used here to provide a more robust and comprehensive account of the experiences of women who have developed women’s adult education programs in Turkey.

Archival Research and Analysis

I devoted the first ten months of in-country fieldwork (August, 2013-June, 2014) to archival research and historical analysis. Through archival research, I hoped to gain a better understanding of the historical contexts and educational environments that have shaped the development of women’s adult education programs in Turkey.

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the history of both women’s education and women’s social movements in Turkey. In addition to using this process of data collection for constructing the semi-structured qualitative questionnaire used in this study and for subsequent triangulation of interviews, the research conducted during this phase of my project is also reflected in Chapter 4: Literature Review.

I centered my archival research at The Women’s Library and Information Center in Istanbul, Turkey. The Women’s Library and Information Center is the first and only library devoted to women’s history in Turkey. Founded in 1990, with a mission to “offer proper information to women researchers and preserve today’s written documents for future generations,” the Women’s Library and information center currently houses more than 10,000 books, 230 periodicals, and over 10,000 newspaper clippings, academic articles, and documents written about women. Additionally, the library houses a collection devoted specifically to the expansion of women’s education programs throughout Turkey. Much of the research necessary to carry out my dissertation project was found in this repository.

During this time period, I also visited a number of women’s and gender studies centers as well as adult education programs located at various universities throughout Turkey. I scheduled appointments to meet with academics whose research focused on issues related to women’s rights, women’s movements and adult education. Many of these academics had also served as founding members of various women-led CSOs. During these meetings, I requested recommendations for publications on topics related to my project, course syllabi, reading lists, recorded visual and audio media. I was also fortunate to receive a copy of detailed footnotes from an individual intimately involved with the development of CSO-based women’s non-formal education projects during the 1990s. I also enrolled in the course, “The Woman Question in Turkey: Interdisciplinary

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Conceptualizations” in the Gender and Women’s Studies Department at Middle East Technical University in Ankara.

Curricula Collection

Previous studies have underscored the importance of examining the content of curricula and school textbooks, as these texts reflect the politics of the time in which they were written, represent which forms of knowledge are deemed legitimate, define acceptable social standards and have the power to influence individual and collective identities. Furthermore, cross-national studies have found pervasive gender bias in the curricula and textbooks of formal schools. As highlighted in Chapters 2 and 3, this phenomenon extends to formal educational institutions in Turkey, where the “politics of official knowledge” does not “incorporate a holistic approach to gender parity,” leaving non-formal education programs as the most viable means by which to disseminate knowledge related to women’s rights in Turkey.

Guided by this research, which highlights the gendered bias in the construction of dominant cultural narratives in formal school textbooks, I was interested in exploring what themes would emerge from alternative cultural narratives that were written and published by women’s CSOs. To do so, I collected approximately 240 different curricula and textbooks disseminated by women’s CSOs in Turkey. Approximately one half of these texts were collected in the course of conducting

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interviews at the publishing organizations while the other half were acquired by searching the websites of CSOs I was unable to visit, from archives or from conferences and meetings I attended during my fieldwork.

My texts for this stage of the study included newspaper articles, published speeches, research articles, fieldnotes, quotes and interviews, oral histories, curricula and textbooks that I collected from each of these sources. Informed by previous research which has suggested that official discourses of the Turkish state have served as an ideological narrative which have both concealed, excluded and marginalized alternative discourses, my goal in conducting this initial research was to begin to understand and highlight the myriad, complex and often intersecting histories of women’s movements, women-led CSOs and women’s adult education. Beginning with these texts, I sought to identify how language, operating through the medium of discourse, was used in different ways to represent different conceptualizations of women’s adult education and women’s movements throughout Turkey. I also focused on how these texts served to shape the identity of different, and often intersectional groups. Yet, because texts can also serve as agents of change which highlight discordance, resistance and realignment from alternative discursive structures, I sought to identify how these texts not only highlighted acts resistance by various women’s movements but offered an alternative, or “anOther” set of possibilities for gender transformation.

By analyzing collected texts, I tried to understand the relationship between non-formal education projects, women’s movements and CSOs in Turkey. Additionally, I identified areas where

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20 Ibid.
themes of appropriation, discordance and resistance emerged and reflected the evolving purposes, functions and challenges of women’s adult education initiatives. These themes informed the construction of the questionnaire used for semi-structured qualitative interviews during the second stage of my research project. Although most of my archival research took place during the first year of fieldwork, I continued to conduct archival research throughout the second stage of fieldwork, reconstructing sections of the literature review when new concepts emerged in the course of conducting qualitative interviews.

**Qualitative Interviews**

The second stage of my project took place over a period of 12 months (June, 2014-June, 2015), during which I conducted interviews with non-formal education program coordinators located in women-led CSOs (see Appendix C for protocols). Twenty-four women participated in one-on-one interviews. Twenty-two interviews were conducted in Turkish and two interviews were conducted in English. For participants that spoke English, I requested that they use whichever language (or both) they felt most comfortable speaking during the interview. The duration of each interview was approximately an hour and thirty minutes, with most interviews ranging from 1 hour to 2 hours.

Interviews were designed as semi-structured and open-ended to encourage an “exploration of the participant’s experience” as well as to allow topics to be explored in detail with the participant highlighting what constituted the most relevant details on the topic. Open-ended

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25 Qualitative interview questions (in both Turkish and English) can be found in Appendix D.
26 In one of the two English speaking interviews, the participant preferred moving between both languages during the interview.
questions were comprised of both “grand tour”\textsuperscript{28} questions, which asked the participant to
reconstruct aspects of their experiences as well as questions that focused on the participant’s
subjective experiences as education coordinators (see Appendix D for both a Turkish and English
version of questionnaire). Face-to-face interviews were effective for my study, as they allowed for
follow-up questions for greater clarity and provided assistance in answering complex or ambiguous
questions.\textsuperscript{29} Participants were informed of the objectives of the study and the data collection
techniques before interviews were conducted and of the subsequent analyses once the interviews
were completed.\textsuperscript{30}

Participants for the interviews were selected through both a purposeful and snowball
sampling approach. Purposeful selection worked well for my study because it allowed me to more
effectively establish relationships with individuals whose experiences were the most “information
rich cases,”\textsuperscript{31} allowing me to learn about the issues central to my research questions. Participants
were chosen based on three criteria. First, all participants were women. This criterion allowed me to
focus specifically on the issues women experienced in coordinating women’s adult education
programs. Second, participants were either currently, or had recently been involved in a women’s
adult education program coordinated in a CSO. It was important to maintain a broad use of the
term “education” in my study, as many participants preferred the terms “consciousness-raising,”
and “awareness” programs, with some being critical of the term “education” and what it implied

\textsuperscript{29} Nigel Mathers, Nick Fox, & Amanda Hunn, \textit{Using Interviews in a Research Project}, (1 October 2012),
http://www.trentfocus.org.uk/Resources/Using%20Interviews.pdf. As other authors have suggested, I am
uncomfortable with the term “probe,” considering the notion of power and the objectification of the participant that can
be gleaned from this term. Throughout the interviews, I engaged in a process of exploration, using follow-up questions
to gain greater details, to encourage participants to elaborate on experiences, and to clarify specific issues, particularly
when \textit{deyims}, or culturally-specific expressions were used to explain certain experiences. For concerns regarding the term
probe, see Irving Seidman, \textit{Interviewing as Qualitative Research}, 86.
\textsuperscript{30} Michael Quinn Patton, \textit{Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods}, 356.
\textsuperscript{31} Sharan Merriam, \textit{Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education} (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass,
1998), 61.
about their projects. The implications of nomenclature in these programs will be explored further in later chapters. The final selection criterion was based on ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Since much of the documented history of women’s adult education programs does not cover the experiences of women’s organizations that identify as religious or as Kurdish, I sought to interview women who self-identified as religious or Kurdish. This criterion allowed me to examine how underrepresented women may experience different challenges in the coordination of women’s adult education in Turkey.

To select participants that met these criteria, I identified current Turkish organizations focusing on education and gender issues using multiple Turkish directories for CSOs. After selecting organizations, I e-mailed and called each of them to explain the purpose of my project and to request their participation in the study (see Appendix E for text of e-mail). All correspondence related to recruitment was conducted in Turkish. Using this method, I was able to recruit 19 of the 24 participants in the study. The remaining five participants were recommended by recruited participants, which was particularly helpful in reaching some of the “hidden populations” of women’s adult education programs located in less well-known CSOs.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed within one week to ten days after completing the interview. Following transcription, Turkish interviews were translated into English. As a fluent Turkish speaker who worked in Turkey for three years and took three years of intensive, university-level coursework in Turkish, the transcription and translation process was feasible to complete; however, in order to increase the reliability of my results, I hired a native speaker to assist in the transcription.

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process of transcription and to verify translations.  

Analysis and Writing

Following the transcription and translation of interviews, I coded the interview transcripts and collected curricula and notes from archival research employing an inductive approach. I thoroughly read and reread each of the transcripts, took notes in my preliminary exploration of the data and then embarked on a process of open coding, categorization and contiguity. I engaged in a process of line-by-line coding in order to reduce the likelihood of “imputing” my own ontological assumptions to my participants and to their collected experiences. By engaging in a process of open coding, I sought to “consider the meanings of words, phrases, sentences and larger expressive or dialogic units” that emerged through immersion and systematic sifting and resifting of data for key themes, or “key moments.” From this process, I began to look at similarities and differences in emergent concepts, grouping them into loose clusters or categories. These categories were named for their ability to represent their breadth as well as other sub-categories contained therein. I also

34 A consent form was signed to ensure their confidentiality.
38 Thomas Lindlof and Bryan Taylor, *Qualitative Communication Research Methods*.
identified contiguity relationships among data that focused on connections between particular ideas instead of similarities or differences.  

Using these techniques, I sought to both identify connections between patterns and themes that emerged during the process of coding and to interrogate the data in a manner that brought forth complex connections that may have otherwise remained occulted. After coding the collected data, I employed respondent validation as an alternative form of evidence regarding the validity of my analysis by having multiple participants verify whether the themes were accurate and the interpretations were representative.

It is important to note that in the final stages of analysis and in the writing of Chapters 5-7, I purposefully chose to prioritize the confidentiality of participants over providing a detailed account of the characteristics of participants involved in this study. Given the participants in this study, I was concerned with the potential for deductive disclosure in this study, namely that providing certain characteristics might increase the likelihood that participants would be identifiable in the final written analysis. While I recognize that alternative approaches have been developed to “make assurances” of confidentiality while providing a rich account of characteristics, I found these

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45 Using her study of breast cancer survivors Karen Kaiser (2009) offers an alternative approach to protecting respondent confidentiality in qualitative research that prioritizes the informed consent process and the audience for one’s research. Taking both of these considerations into account in my own study, I ultimately maintain that the study population in this research may not be best suited for the recommendations that she provides. Future studies should examine whether such an approach may (or may not be) useful in an international or cross-cultural research setting. See Karen Kaiser, Protecting Respondent Confidentiality in Qualitative Research,” *Qualitative Health Research* 19, no. 11 (2009): 1632-1641.
approaches to be somewhat limited for the context in which I conducted research. I fully accept the limitations inherent in such an approach; in particular, by failing to provide certain demographic information, I may have failed to adequately represent certain challenges and experiences as those of particular minority groups. However, in light of the political events surrounding the issue of freedom of speech in Turkey which took place while I was writing the final chapters of this dissertation, as well as my own positionality as a researcher removed from this political context, I ultimately chose to adhere to a strict standard of confidentiality in the reporting of participant’s experiences.

**Positionality of the Researcher**

Standpoint methodologies serve a foundational role in this dissertation project. As a feminist researcher, I fully accept that my work is inherently political. However, the promotion of women’s education as a key objective of the global campaign for gender equality is also an inherently political activity, as evidenced not only by the development discourse which prioritize women’s education as the “basis for the full promotion and improvement of the status of women,” but also the bilateral and multilateral funding for women’s non-formal education programs. Consequently, my research project does not introduce, but rather problematizes the politics, distinct cultural interests and values promoted by the discourses of dominant, western institutions in the propagation of women’s non-formal education.

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Furthermore, by problematizing the “taken for granted” variation associated with women-led CSOs, I sought through this study to both highlight the diversity of challenges experienced by women who have coordinated adult education programs in women-led CSOs and to expose the myriad, socially situated effects of interacting with what Nüket Kardam (2004) has identified as the “global gender equality regime.”

By “starting off” research from the lives of women who coordinate adult education programs in women-led civil society organizations, I sought to identify challenges related to these programs that have been largely ignored by development agencies committed to the promotion of women’s education. Additionally, I tried to identify the ways in which U.S. and international aid organizations can remain committed to the promotion of women’s adult education, while adjusting programs to local realities and challenges by positioning local actors as subjects, rather than objects of education projects.

Moreover, single country case studies, particularly those performed by outsiders in Comparative Education research, have been criticized for their potential to essentialize groups. The practice of essentializing women, or attempting to superimpose a singular ‘women’s perspective’ on adult education by ignoring the ways in which women experience and interact with oppressive institutions differently (including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, religion, class, ableism and sexual orientation) not only serves to reinforce certain gender stereotypes but, in many ways, may serve to further marginalize women. I recognize my status as an outsider in this study and that my positionality as a white, middle-class American woman with graduate-level education and non-native

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Turkish speaking abilities, may have limited who I was able to contact in this study and what information participants may have focused on in this study.50 Consequently, it is important to stress here that my goal was to highlight the experiences of women who participated in study, but not to generalize their experiences as representative of all education coordinators working in women-led civil society organizations in Turkey. Throughout this study, I sought to develop progressive research strategies in my dissertation design to avoid essentialism in my own project as well as exploitation of women’s diverse experiences. Specifically, I kept field notes to comprehensively identify the social values which shaped and influenced my research approaches both prior to conducting fieldwork and during the fieldwork stage of my dissertation.51 While I tried to incorporate a diverse range of perspectives in the analysis chapters of this dissertation, I recognize that there are a number of perspectives that have not been adequately considered within these pages. In particular, a number of organizations are currently working to improve educational opportunities as well as the political rights of LGBTQ persons, Armenians, Laz people, religious minorities such as Alevi and Yazidi communities as well as many other minority communities. That the experiences of these diverse communities have not been adequately incorporated here is a great limitation to this study. Future studies should strive to incorporate more diverse communities into a broader analysis of women’s adult education projects throughout Turkey.

50 As an outsider, I am aware of my own potential for projecting Western feminist biases on the construction and analysis of this study. To reduce potential biases, in addition to taking field notes, I intend to keep the qualitative sections of my dissertation open-ended, so as to broaden the dialogue space, rather than limit the range of issues that will be explored. In doing so, I hope to ensure that my own Western feminist biases do not serve to exclude important forms of knowledge in the course of understanding the institutionalization of women’s studies programs in Turkey.

Limitations

As is the nature of most qualitative research, the findings in my study may neither be
generalizable to all women’s adult education programs, nor do they represent the experiences of all
women who have coordinated education projects in CSOs in Turkey. In fact, I would stress here
that there are hundreds of CSOs located in Turkey that seek to provide some type of women’s adult
education program. Yet, despite the breadth of these types of programs, there continues to be
limited research that considers the contributions of these programs to adult education research.

From the onset of this project, my goal was not to produce a generalizable account, but to begin to
uncover and highlight some women’s experiences in the development of women’s adult education
programs. My study seeks to highlight the issues raised by the women I spoke with, in the hope of
creating an avenue for future studies to build upon and contribute to a canon of adult education that
both considers and values women’s perspectives, and experiences.

Additionally, while I tried to incorporate a diverse range of perspectives in this project, I was
limited by available resources, including time and money. I was fortunate to have been funded by
multiple organizations over the course of this project, which allowed me to remain in Turkey and
travel to a number of locations during my two years of fieldwork. Yet, a larger study would provide
the opportunity to reach more geographic locations and incorporate perspectives from other diverse
racial, ethnic, religious, educational and socioeconomic backgrounds as well as more diverse sexual
orientations. Including these perspectives would provide multiple lenses through which to
understand the complex and intersecting nature of marginalization in adult education. Although
some women in this study raise the issue of working with men in the development of gender
transformative education programs, future studies can build on these insights by including interviews
with men who have worked with women’s adult education programs.
Furthermore, my own positionality as an outsider must be recognized as a potential limitation to this research project. As James Hoopes (1999) explains, the race, ethnicity, class, gender and nationality of an interviewer can shape the process of an interview.\textsuperscript{52} As an interviewer, my background as a white, middle-class American woman with graduate-level education that focuses on critical feminist and social justice frameworks in many ways shaped my interest in this project, how I employed initial research protocols and how I approached and analyzed the interviews. With the understanding that these factors inevitably became “part of the context”\textsuperscript{53} of the interviews, I took fieldnotes and kept a research journal\textsuperscript{54} to identify both the social values that have shaped and influenced my research approach and how I communicated during the course of each interview.\textsuperscript{55}

A Note on Language:

Capturing the diversity of experiences articulated by participants in this project would have been impossible if I had relied on English as a medium of communication. My own views align with James Spradley’s insights regarding the importance of learning the native language in ethnographic fieldwork:

[w]hen ethnographers do not learn the language, but instead depend on interpreters, they have great difficulty learning how natives think, how they perceive the world, and what assumptions they make about human experience.\textsuperscript{56}

That being said, while I speak and read at an advanced level of Turkish, I am not a native


\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 85.

\textsuperscript{54} See Pat Bazeley, \textit{Qualitative Data Analysis Practical Strategies} (London: Sage, 2013), 102-104 which outlines the methods I used for reflection in a research journal throughout my fieldwork.

\textsuperscript{55} It is important to highlight here that as a researcher, I take very seriously the notion of researcher positionality and the “futility” of attempting to erase one’s privilege through the research process. While I have sought to engage in continuous self-reflection throughout the course of this project to limit my own bias as a researcher, no amount of reflection in this project can substitute for one’s lived experience, particularly in light of the concepts and concerns raised by participants in my study. Not only should I not “speak for” the participants in my study, but I cannot.

\textsuperscript{56} James Spradley, \textit{The Ethnographic Interview}, 20.
speaker of Turkish, which sometimes limited my ability to understand certain cultural expressions that were used during the interviews. In order to reduce the challenges that might arise while conducting interviews in Turkish, in the year preceding the interview stage of my fieldwork, I hired a private tutor who was a graduate student in a Gender and Women’s Studies Department at a university in Turkey who helped prepare me to speak on the subject matter of the project at the level of a native speaker. While this improved my own confidence and prepared me to conduct the interviews in Turkish, initial expectations regarding my language levels and abilities may have restricted the nature of the conversation and, at times, the information I was able to access. It is my hope that the concepts generated through this project may encourage further developments and broader examinations of the complexity and variety of women’s adult education programs located in CSOs.
Chapter Four: Literature Review

The Emergence of Women’s Education Programs in Turkey

In order to understand the context in which education and training programs directed toward women emerged in Turkey, it is important to first examine the place education holds within the unique history of women’s movements in Turkey. This history lends greater insight into the historical, social, and cultural context that allowed women’s civil society organizations (CSOs) and women-led education programs to emerge. Additionally, the history of women’s movements in Turkey, particularly in the 1990s, serves as a useful lens for understanding the important, but often challenging relationship between the multiple actors involved in the creation and promotion of women’s adult education, as well as the implementation of these education programs in local contexts.

Historical Background of Women’s Movement and Education in Turkey

Scholars examining women’s movements in Turkey date the relationship between women’s emancipation and modernization projects in Turkey back to the Tanzimat reform period, starting with the promulgation of the *ferman* (decree) in 1839.¹ This direct influence of the Tanzimat reform policies on women represented an important, early turning point in the history of women’s movements in Turkey.² As Gündüz (2004) explains, because the Tanzimat reforms were greatly

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¹ The Tanzimat Reforms were a set of secular reforms policies carried out between the years of 1839-1876. These reforms sought to ‘modernize’ the Ottoman Empire by adopting European laws, particularly related to education, legal systems, and military systems. For a comprehensive examination of the Tanzimat Reforms, see Ilber Ortayli, *Studies on Ottoman Transformation* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 2010); Deniz Kandiyoti, *Women, Islam, and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 23.

² The Pre-Tanzimat period has been defined by a period of the Ottoman Empire defined by a powerful, centralized state, and a social structure based on religious differentiation and gender. Under this system, women were not legally equal to men, and women’s lives were centered around the family. For a more comprehensive review of the Pre-Tanzimat period, see Ilber Ortayli, *Studies on Ottoman Transformation.*
influenced by European laws, women’s issues became important to address. The oppression of women became an “obstacle for the modernization of the Empire;” accordingly, a series of reforms were created that reflected the belief that the situation of women was associated with the development of a more “civilized,” “modernized” and “westernized” population. Education reforms were particularly significant, with the development of secondary schooling for girls in 1858, girls’ vocational schools in 1869, and a training-college for women teachers in 1870. Girls were given equal inheritance rights under The 1858 Land Reform Bill and female slavery was banned following the ratification of international treaties in 1880 and 1890.

According to Tekeli (1990), it was these reforms, coupled with the “atmosphere of relative freedom” cultivated by The Young Turk Revolution of 1908, that the first feminists in Turkey emerged. During this period educated, middle-class women, generally from urban intellectual circles, began publishing magazines and newspapers and forming the first women’s associations, debating the issues of polygamy and repudiation, rights granted by Şeriat (Islamic law) to men. During the Balkan Wars and the First World War, women were admitted to universities (1914),

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6 The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 generally refers to the revolution that marks the onset of the Second Constitutional Era in Turkey. The revolution restored the parliament and the Ottoman constitution of 1876. Both had been suspended by Sultan Abdulhamid II in 1878. See Şükrü Hanioğlu, Preparation for a Revolution: The Young Turks, 1902-1908 (London: Oxford University Press, 2001).
allowed to work in factories and public service (1915), and the 1917 “Family Act” “recognized the right to limit polygamy.”

Women’s Rights in the Early Modern Turkish Republic: 1923-1980s

After the founding of the modern Turkish Republic in 1923, a number of reforms were instituted to ensure constitutional and statutory recognition of equality between men and women. For the founders of the modern Republic of Turkey, education was a chief priority and “the most powerful peaceful means to transform individuals from passive subjects to active citizens.” For example, in 1924, the Unification of Education Law sought to establish a secular form of education perceived “to be the cornerstone of republican reforms, through which modernization and the creation of a citizenry were to be achieved.” Accordingly, this law made five-year, primary school compulsory and free to both sexes, and co-education was introduced at the higher levels of education. In 1926, a Swiss-inspired Civil Code, which granted women equal rights to men in issues of inheritance and divorce and “resolved the problem of polygamy once and for all,” was adopted.

By 1930, women in Turkey were granted the right to be elected and to vote in local elections, and by 1934 these rights were extended to national elections. The following year, a total of eighteen women were elected to serve as representatives of the National Assembly, a number that

9 Tekeli argues that although this law was never applied due to the context and conditions of the war, it served as a an important “first step” in the Islamic world. See Şirin Tekeli, “The Turkish Women’s Movement: A Brief History of Success,” _Quaererns de la Mediterrania_, 14 (2010): 120.


represented 4.5 per cent of the total seats in the assembly, one of the highest proportions of women representatives in the world at that time.\footnote{Tekeli, “The Turkish Women’s Movement,” 120.}

Women had acquired many rights through changes implemented after the founding of the early period of the modern Turkish Republic; however, as Arat (1989) has argued, the nature in which these reforms were implemented “preempted the emergence of a women’s movement,” in Turkey in subsequent decades.\footnote{Yeşim Arat, The Patriarchal Paradox: Women Politicians in Turkey, (London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1989), 33.} Despite the numerous reforms enacted at the early stages of the modern Turkish Republic as part of the modernization process and which aided women’s emancipation in Turkey, numerous scholars have identified the limitations of a state-led top-down approach on the full liberation of women in Turkey as well as the trajectory of the women’s movement.\footnote{See Ayşe Öncü, “Turkish Women in the Professions: Why So Many?” in Şirin Tekeli (ed.) Women in Modern Turkish Society (London: Zed Books, 1994): 81-93. Additionally, Deniz Kandiyoti, “Emancipated but Unliberated? Reflections on the Turkish Case,” Feminist Studies, 13, no. 2 (Summer, 1987): 323.}

As Kandiyoti (1987) explains, “[t]he case of Turkey illustrates both the potentials and the limitations of reforms instigated by a political vanguard in the absence of a significant women’s movement.”\footnote{Kandiyoti, “Emancipated but Unliberated? Reflections on the Turkish Case,” 323.} While the reforms of the modern Turkish Republic provided avenues for women to attain education, economic independence, social mobility and political efficacy, these reforms “did not effectively alter the patriarchal nature of values and relationships conditioning the day-to-day living experience of most women.”\footnote{Feride Acar, “Higher Education in Turkey: A Gold Bracelet for Women,” in The Gender Gap in Higher Education, S. Stiver Lie, L. Malik and D. Harris (eds.), London: Kogan Page, 1994, 160-170, 161.} Because rights were granted by a political elite focused on establishing evidence of democratization and modernization in Turkey -particularly in the fields of
education and law—19 the emancipatory measures of the early period of the modern Turkish Republic, as well as their impacts, have been described as paradoxical, or “in rather contradictory terms as being either spectacular or merely superficial and cosmetic.”

Arat (1998, 2003) explored these paradoxes through interviews with women who made their way through the education system during the early years of the modern Turkish Republic.21 All of the women interviewed reflected on being proud of their education and on its usefulness. Despite the rationalization of a “feminized curriculum” in order to improve maternal care during the early years of the modern republic, participants in Arat’s study dismissed the notion that they received any form of gendered curricula, with some even arguing that the education they received was “gender-neutral.”22 From her interviews, Arat concludes that these women reflected Kandiyoti’s conceptualization of “emancipated but unliberated” by being both “proud of being part of ‘the progress,’ but…aware that the progress was limited” and subject to reversals.23

Following the advances related to women’s rights in Turkey in the 1930s, the period of 1940 to 1960 has been referred to as a “period of stagnation,”24 or “the barren years.”25 The lack of feminist discourse during these years has been attributed to the symbolic role women played as

20 Kandiyoti, “Emancipated but Unliberated?” 322. Specifically, Tekeli (1994) indicates that the timing of legislation for women’s emancipation may have partly been encouraged by a desire to differentiate the single-party from European dictatorships during the same period. See Şirin Tekeli, “Women in Turkish Politics,” ed. Şirin Tekeli, Women in Modern Turkish Society: A Reader (London: Zed Books, 1994), 293-310.
“guardians of the reforms, progress, modernization, and enlightenment.”26 Rather than challenging this particular identity, women both accepted and internalized their role within the modernization discourse.27

According to Coşar and Onbaşı (2008), from the years 1923 to 1950, any attempts to create forms of opposition, particularly the development of civil society organizations, were curbed.28 Although women were “deeply indebted” to the founding of the modern republic and its founding father, Kemal Atatürk, a “heavy price” was paid, including the right to develop or legitimate independent feminist civil-society organizations.29 Reformers of the republic were eager to implement liberalization policies, but were not keen on allowing the development of women’s independent organizations, or of feminist discourse.30

This trend is particularly identifiable from an examination of women’s attempts to organize during this time. For example, when the Kadınlar Halk Fırkast (Women’s People’s Party) sought to establish itself as the first women’s political party in Turkey in 1923, its petition was rejected on the basis that women had not gained political rights, and thus had no use for a political party.31 Instead, these women were encouraged to develop an association, which became the Türk Kadınlar Birliği (Turkish Women’s Association) in 1924, led by well-known feminist Nezihe Muhiddin, who advocated for the active participation of women in parliament. Muhiddin was later discredited by the CHP, or the Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People’s Party) and replaced with a less vocal

27 Arat, “From Emancipation to Liberation,” 106-123.
29 Tekeli, “The Turkish Women’s Movement: A Brief History of Success.”
30 Arat, “From Emancipation to Liberation,” 107-123.
31 Ibid., 107-123.
representative.\(^{32}\) After women were granted the right to vote and stand in elections in 1935, the association was asked to shut down, with the reasoning that because women had achieved their primary task of equality, there was no need “to struggle for women’s emancipation.”\(^{33}\)

Following this period of stagnancy, a number of women’s associations emerged in the 1950s. Most of these associations were formed in the major metropolitan areas of Turkey, including Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir, although they later expanded to other areas of Turkey. According to Ecevit (2011), most of these organizations were largely apolitical, with a focus on volunteerism and philanthropy in the promotion of educational and social welfare issues in Turkey. Its members were most often women from well-educated, upper-middle or upper-class socioeconomic backgrounds who concentrated their efforts on improving national development by providing financial assistance and scholarships to poor, but promising young girls in Turkey.\(^{34}\)

In addition to the philanthropic organizations founded in the previous decades, several professional associations were established during the 1960s and the 1970s. These associations began to place women at the center of the promotion of women’s rights, focusing on women’s struggles in their everyday lives as well as their collective struggle for “equality, democracy, progress and peace.”\(^{35}\) Some organizations, such as the Association of Progressive Women (APW), adopted a Marxist-feminist discourse, organizing mass demonstrations and distributing their own publications. However, during this time period the Turkish government “showed no interest in women’s issues and rights” and responded to women’s organizations with hostility.\(^{36}\)

\(^{34}\) For a full review of the associations developed during this time, see Yıldız Ecevit, “Women’s Rights, Women’s Organizations, and the State,” 192.
Changing Political Opportunity Structures and the Rise of Women’s Movements

The strong influence of the state in Turkey, particularly in stifling claims for individual civic rights and the organization of civil society groups, coupled with the powerful rhetoric that the reforms of the early period of the modern republic resolved the “women question,” had a powerful impact on the trajectory of women’s movements in Turkey until the early 1980s. Until 1980, women’s associations in Turkey were largely philanthropic or professional and “existed without any voice, let alone any clout.”

As Ecevit (2011) notes, “the scope and the strength of women’s movement in the post-1980s period cannot be compared with women’s activism in the previous periods.” Coşar and Onbaşı (2008) offer two explanations for the distinctiveness of the development of women’s collective, issue-based participation during the 1980s. First, the authors argue that as a result of the military coup, “ideological attachments of the previous decade” were banned from politics in Turkey, requiring both the reinterpretation of Kemalism during the 1980s, but also a space for women to reorganize their activities according to new forms of organization that were not within the “pre-established frames of grand social projects.”

Consequently, the first signs of a women’s movement in Turkey emerged within a context where political life and democracy had been brought to halt by the military intervention of

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37 For a comprehensive examination of the development of women’s identity politics from the 1920s to the 1980s see Yakın Ertürk, “Turkey’s Modern Paradoxes: Identity Politics, Women’s Agency, and Universal Rights.”

38 Yeşim Arat, “Toward a Democratic Society: The Women’s Movement in Turkey in the 1980s,” Women’s Studies International Forum, 17, no. 2/3 (1994): 243. It is important to note that women were also involved in politicized movements during this time; however their activities were generally restricted within men’s leftist groups. In the 1970s, the Progressive Women’s Organization sought to question the gender equality claims of the state, but these women were exiled following the 1980 military intervention. See Şirin Tekeli “The Turkish Women’s Movement: A Brief History of Success,” 14.


Ertürk (2006) explains that the return to civil rule and the election of Turgut Özal and the newly established Motherland Party in 1983, with its focus on entrepreneurialism and western-centered capitalism, generated a space of “eroded statism” which provided a “degree of individualization of public space, allowing for divergent demands to be voiced.” Within this space, women played a unique role in the process of re-democratization in Turkey, organizing in consciousness-raising groups and collective campaigns, and challenging the notion that women’s rights were protected by the state. Women who were associated with Turkish feminism in the 1980s shared particular traits of being well-educated, professional, middle-class and who often had connections to feminists working outside of Turkey.

Coşar and Onbaşı (2008) argue that the efforts of reorganization during this time period, with a focus on the private as political, may have been identified as apolitical, or rather a direct confrontation to the state. During this period, the women’s movement sought to ‘identify new forms of political participation’ aimed at increasing public awareness and reacting to state policies, rather than seeking state action on women’s issues. For example, feminists protested the 1926 Civil Law, which recognized the husband as “head” of the household, relegating the wife to “carer” status. In 1986, a petition campaign was held in Ankara and Istanbul due to the state’s failure to implement the 1985 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW).

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42 Yakın Ertürk, “Turkey’s Modern Paradoxes,” 93.
43 It is interesting to note that politicized women of the 1980s did not actively seek to participate in state-organized political parties and elections, perhaps due to the effects of state influence on the women’s movement prior to the 1980s. For a more comprehensive account see Yeşim Arat, “Toward a Democratic Society,” 240-244.
On May 17th, 1987, 3,000 women marched in Istanbul to protest domestic violence. By the end of the decade, Article 438 of the Turkish Penal Code, which gave reduced sentences in cases of rape if the victim was determined to be a prostitute, and Article 159 of the Turkish Civil Code that required a woman to have her husband’s consent to work were both declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court.

Institutionalization in the Turkish Women’s Movement: 1990s

While the women’s movement in Turkey during the 1980s was marked by a negative attitude towards the state, the 1990s reflected greater efforts to establish a stronger relationship with the state. As a result, the 1990s demonstrated an extensive level of institutionalization of the women’s movement in Turkey. Kasapoğlu and Özerkmen (2011) explain that the inclusion of women’s issues on political agendas in Turkey in the last decade of the twentieth century was connected to the Fifth Year Development Plan of Turkey (1985-1990) as well as the establishment of the General Directorate for the Status of Women in 1990. According to Ertürk (2006), the increased collaboration between state and civil society created by the development of the national machinery for women and the rapid expansion of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provided women’s

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47 This particular protest was motivated by a court case in 1987, where a woman was seeking a divorce on the grounds of domestic violence. The judge, who refused the divorce referenced an old proverb, “You should never leave a woman’s back without a stick and her womb without a colt.” See Şirin Tekeli, “The Turkish Women’s Movement: A Brief History of Success,” 195.

48 The campaign against Article 438 emerged from the result of a court case in 1989, where a raped woman was presented by the defense attorney as a prostitute in order to get a reduced sentence for the rapist. See Pınar Ilkkaracan, “A Brief Overview of Women’s Movement(s) in Turkey,” Women for Women’s Human Rights Reports No. 2 (Women for Women’s Human Rights), 1997.


groups with the institutional framework to influence the state and gave women ownership of women’s issues on the state agenda.  

During this decade, the momentum of the women’s movement paved the way for what many have called “project feminism,” where a number of women’s journals and magazines were published, women’s studies programs and research centers were developed within universities and the number and diversity of women’s NGOs expanded in Turkey. Additionally, the “NGOization” of the women’s movement constituted a dramatic shift for Turkey, a country that, until the 1990s, had not extensively engaged with non-governmental organizations. Women’s NGOs sought to alter the relationship between state and civil society. An empirical study of 40 women’s NGOs in Turkey indicated that organizations during this decade shifted their focus from service, charity, volunteer-based elite organizations to service, advocacy orientation, global networking, external fundraising and increased professionalism.

Kardam and Ertürk (1999) attribute the expansion of women’s NGOs, as well as the enhanced communication channels between women and civil society to the confluence of international networks for women’s rights, increased gender-sensitive donor assistance, and an increased openness in Turkish society that “allowed for more space for women and the

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52 Ertürk, “Turkey’s Modern Paradoxes,” 99. It is worth noting that the development of this form of “Project feminism” has also been criticized for leading to the fragmentation of the feminist movement, serving as an obstacle to it’s own development.


accompanying maturation and shifts in the focus of women’s organizations.”57 This increased access to the international arena enjoyed by women’s movements shifted their focus toward influencing public policies, making these policies more gender sensitive and establishing gender mainstreaming in Turkey.58

The changing relationship between state and civil society, as well as the emerging influence of the international women’s movement on women’s rights in Turkey and increased gender sensitive donor assistance resulted in a distinct change in focus in the women’s rights agenda. Following the acceptance of the Convention on the Elimination of All Types of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1985 and the Helsinki Summit in 1999, which gave official candidate country status to Turkey within the European Union, a sweeping reform process took place, advancing existing efforts to improve women’s rights in Turkey.59 The “NGO”ization of women’s movements in Turkey, coupled with improved Turkey-EU relations, profoundly affected women’s rights issues in Turkey. As women’s rights were increasingly highlighted as one of the “key issues in Turkey’s accession process to the European Union,” donor programs and the legislative changes demanded by the EU accession process helped strengthen the role of Turkish women’s rights organizations in domestic politics.60

57 Nüket Kardam and Yakın Ertürk, “Expanding Gender Accountability,” 170.
60 Kardam and Ertürk, “Expanding Gender Accountability,” 167-197.
Institutionalized but Fragmented: Rising Counter-Women’s Movements in Turkey

Although the 1990s brought institutionalization to the women’s movement in Turkey, the decade also reflected a high level of fragmentation amongst various women’s groups. As Diner and Toktaş (2010) note, a rise in identity politics brought a change in the actors, discourse, and the themes that arose in Turkish politics and the women’s movement. Within the changing dynamics of the woman question and the politics of identity and difference in Turkey, two groups in particular, the Islamic women’s and Kurdish women’s movements, raised criticisms towards “Kemalist feminism” and the prevailing women’s movement within the country. Each of these women’s movements, as well as their critiques of the prevailing women’s movement in Turkey during the 1990s will be explained in greater detail below.

Islamic Women’s Movements

Research generally indicates that Islamic women became active as a separate women’s movement in post-1980s Turkey, challenging the prevailing notions of secularism, democracy and national identity in Turkey. Varying accounts have been offered to explain the increased activism of

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62 It is important to note that although the terms “Islamic women” and “Islamist women” have often been used interchangeably, research cites specific differences between the two terms. Arat (2005) notes that, broadly, “Islamist women” refers to “self-conscious Muslims who expected the state to respect public expressions of religiosity, some women who were ready to fight for these beliefs and others who did not want any confrontation with the state.” However, Turam (2007) explains that while “Islamic” actors do not challenge secular state ideology and only seek freedom to express their views and lifestyles. It is more likely, rather that “Islamist” actors, would support transforming the political order in a manner which accommodates their beliefs. Şişman (2000) identifies that while no women have referred to themselves as Islamist women, there have been women who have identified with “Islamic” or “pious Muslim women;” for these reasons, the term “Islamic women” will be used here. See Yeşim Arat, Rethinking Islam and Liberal Democracy: Islamist Women in Turkish Politics, (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2005), 21; Berna Turam, Between Islam and the State: The Politics of Engagement, (Stanford California: Stanford University Press), 2007; Nazife, Şişman, Kamusal Alanın Baştırdılıkları: Fatma Karabıyık Barbaroş’un İle ~~Söyleşiler, (Timaş Yayınları), 2000. Arat, in identifying the contributions of Islamist women to political change in Turkey, defines “Islamist” as “the explicit use of Islam as a political ideology rather than a private religious belief system.” She further notes, “Islamist women” is a loose phrase that denotes a heterogeneous group of women, including those who only seek the right to cover their heads in public as well as the militant activists of the Islamist Welfare Party.” See Yeşim Arat, “Feminists, Islamists, and Political Change in Turkey,” 117-131.
Islamic women, drawing linkages to the “deficiencies of the Kemalist modernization project,” as well as increased migration.63

Perhaps the most visible symbol of the Islamic women’s movement has been the politicization of the headscarf, where its use in public spaces remains a contested issue and has historically been a source of contention in the women’s rights agenda in Turkey. To “be visible” and to “serve God,”64 Islamic women constitute “a subjective rupture from the roles defined within the boundaries of traditionalism…[situating] themselves within the modern condition.”65 Yakın Ertürk (2006) argues that the veiling of Islamist women served not only as a symbol of “cultural authenticity” for the Islamist movement, but also as a form of “defiance” against the Republican modernization project which, by controlling and confining religion to the private realm, excluded women because of their veiling from its public, mainstream institutions.66 As Yılmaz (2011) notes, particularly in regard to the right to wear headscarves, Islamic women were not necessarily fighting for what have often been considered Islamic beliefs, but for secular beliefs such as individual rights, freedom of beliefs, democratic rights which extended to the rights to education, job acquisition, rights to participation in funeral and Friday prayers and women’s role in politics as well as the struggle for women’s rights and individual freedom between Islam and secularism in Turkey.67

The struggle for the right to wear headscarves has a history that extends further back than the 1980s. Following the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the headscarf was considered to be a symbol of backwardness and ignorance. This was reflected in policies of public institutions...

63 Yeşim Arat, “Feminists, Islamists, and Political Change in Turkey,” 123.
64 Sibel Eraslan, “Islamci Kadının Siyasette Zaman Algısı Üzerine,” in Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce, Islamcılık no. 6 Yakın Aktya (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004), 819.
whereby women in their employ as officials dressed modernly and were not allowed to wear the headscarf while women who worked as cleaners and servants were asked to cover their heads while working. This mentality extended to institutions of education where university women were punished for wearing headscarves. In the 1950s and 1960s there were women who wore headscarves while attending Turkish universities, yet there are a number of examples indicating that, particularly in metropolitan areas, there was little familiarity or tolerance toward those female students who wore the headscarf. For example, although Gülşen Ataseven graduated at the top of her class from the faculty of medicine in 1964, her prize was given to the second best student because she wore a headscarf. In 1968, Hatice Babacan, a young woman in the Ankara University Faculty of Divinity, was dismissed from the school after being slapped by a professor. The event was met with strong opposition from Islamic groups, ultimately leading to the resignation of Dean Neşat Çağatay. In 1972, Emine Aykenar was dismissed from the legal profession by the Ankara Bar Association after stating that she would not unveil her head in a trial of the Council of State.

According to Ömer Çağ (2013), while individual cases regarding the headscarf occurred during the 1960s and 1970s, the headscarf emerged as a political issue at the national level following the Council of Higher Education’s (Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu/YÖK) decision in 1982 to prohibit students who wore headscarves from attending universities. The February 28 process, also known as the 1997 Military Memorandum, effectively banned headscarves in all departments of universities.

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throughout Turkey, forcing women students to remove their headscarves in “ikna odaları” (persuasion rooms) set up at the entrance to university campuses. While the headscarf was not the only political issue that emerged during this period, it has been considered one of the main focuses of the struggle against the state during that time. The state’s position against headscarves was not only limited to Turkish universities that were controlled by YÖK, but extended to schools controlled by the Ministry of National Education as well.\textsuperscript{72}

The issue of Kemalist secularism and Kemalist vision has been cited as a source of antagonism among Islamic women. For female students, the following text provides an example of the feelings associated with Kemalist secularism and Islamic women’s experiences in the university:

January 1998: Female students with headscarves attending universities started to be blacklisted by secretaries at the doors. The letter “T” was put in the place of or near the names of these students. In class attendance registers, exam papers, health records and security records. Women were marked only, simply and shortly with the letter “T”. I liken this letter “T” attached to my name to the Zion badge that Anne Frank was obliged to carry. And of course, I liken to those who attached it to the Nazis…\textsuperscript{73}

Islamic women became activated through mass demonstrations opposing the ban of the headscarf in public institutions, including universities.\textsuperscript{74} There were a number of these demonstrations, including the “White March” initiated by sixty veiled medical students and the countrywide human chain, “Hand in Hand for Freedoms of Belief and Thought” on October 11, 1998.\textsuperscript{75} Furthermore, some women sought protection of their legal rights from the international community. For example, in 2004, Leyla Şahin, a fifth year medical student brought suit against Turkey to the European Court of Human Rights for upholding a decision that prohibited her from

\textsuperscript{72} Ömer Çaha, \textit{Sivil Kadın: Türkiye'de Kadın ve Sivil Toplum} (Ankara, Türkiye: Savaş Kitap ve Yayınevi, 2010), 317-319.

\textsuperscript{73} Sibel Eraslan, “Uğultular...Silüetler,” in \textit{90'arda Türkiye'de Feminizm} ed. Aksu Bora ve Asena Günal (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2002), 261; Ömer Çaha, “The Islamic Women’s Movement,” 132.

\textsuperscript{74} Ertürk, “Turkey’s Modern Paradoxes,” 96.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 121-133.
entering exams or attending lectures at her university while wearing a headscarf. In 2005, the court upheld the decision of the Turkish government in deference to Turkey’s principles of secularism.76

The “headscarf debate” continues to be a complex issue challenging the notions of secularism, democracy, and religion in Turkey.77 The politics of the headscarf issue emerged not only in the issues of right to education and in the political sphere, but in the questions of economics and employment as well. The prohibition of wearing headscarves in public institutions has also limited the economic and job opportunities for Islamic Turkish women. It is difficult to locate women in both political and economic positions of power because it has been forbidden for them to wear headscarves in public institutions.78

During the late 1980s and the 1990s, Islamic women became active in the development of CSOs as well as in politics, and although many women involved in these organizations identified themselves as apolitical, Islamic women shared a common goal of arguing both for equal rights and the right to be different.79 Today, the number of associations or CSOs focused on the issues of women among Islamic groups is estimated to be over 500.80 Saktanber (2002) explains that the mobilization of Islamic women was largely supported by an environment that facilitated the free display of ethnic, religious, and gender identities.81 Seen as representing a criticism of Turkish “secular order,” by wearing the türban in public institutions, Islamist women were making a

76 ECHR 44774/98 (2005).
78 Zehra Yilmaz “Küresel İslam Hareketinde Kadının Yeni Temsil Biçimleri,” 811-815.
80 Ömer Çaha, “The Islamic Women’s Movement,” 133.
statement about how political authorities could define civic rights as well as how women could participate in the Turkish public sphere.\textsuperscript{82}

Furthermore, Yılmaz (2011) suggests that there are specific reasons why Islamic women have become more mobilized in the fields of CSOs than in political and economic spaces. First, while it has been historically difficult to locate women, particularly those who wear headscarves in the fields of politics, finance and business, the nature of CSOs has made their representation in the public sphere possible. Secondly, because of the voluntary nature of most CSOs, women have been able to participate in these organizations while simultaneously maintaining domestic responsibilities.\textsuperscript{83} Yılmaz (2011) explains that funds from organizations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the European Union (EU) for projects focused on women’s increased participation in the labor force have kept women’s issues alive in CSOs in Turkey, particularly efforts to develop a more democratic model of Islam for women. However, she argues that although this financial support has strengthened participation in CSOs, it has not provided the financial support or adequate spaces for women to participate in dominant political economic and financial spheres.\textsuperscript{84}

\textit{Kurdish Women’s Movements}

The Kurdish Women’s Movement presents an important account of the changing dynamics of both national politics and the politics of women’s movements in Turkey. Kurdish women had long been politically active, starting with the leftist movements that took place during the 1960s and

\textsuperscript{82} Arat, “Feminists, Islamists, and Political Change in Turkey,” 124.
\textsuperscript{83} Zehra Yılmaz “Küresel İslam Hareketinde Kadının Yeni Temsil Biçimleri,” 816.
\textsuperscript{84} Zehra Yılmaz “Küresel İslam Hareketinde Kadının Yeni Temsil Biçimleri,” 818.
the 1970s. The Kurdish Women’s Movement arose within the context of the conflicts between the Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK) and armed forces during the late 1980s and 1990s, highlighting the dual oppression experienced both as a result of their ethnicity and their gender. First politicized under Kurdish nationalism, the mobilization of Kurdish women later led to organized political activism against the sexism and chauvinism of Kurdish nationalist men.

As Çaha (2011) explains, the experiences of Kurdish women, particularly those documented in Kurdish women’s journals serve an important role in exposing the essentialist understanding of the women’s movement and women’s education in Turkey, articulated through the prevailing rhetoric of the Turkish women’s movements. For Kurdish women, the oppressive “other” took two forms, one form being men and the other from being Turkish women. In defining the importance of a Kurdish Feminism, one woman writes:

Why do we define our feminism with an ethnic identity by prefixing the word “Kurdish”? We want to primarily differentiate ourselves from Turkish feminism. The feminism “performed” in Turkey without ethnic identity is automatically understood as Turkish feminism. Women of other ethnicities are ignored, thus, the common feminist discourse serves for those women in the dominant ethnicity, and our differences are covered up. Besides, it implies a political stance against the rejection of our Kurdish identity. Therefore, we need to name our feminism as such. We experience gender segregation in this society intertwined with racism.

Yüksel (2011) highlights the experiences of Kurdish women, detailing their experiences of “marginalization and estrangement” not only by Kurdish men but by the Kemalist modernization

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85 Ömer Çaha, “The Kurdish Women’s Movement: A Third-Wave Feminism within the Turkish Context,” *Turkish Studies*, 12, no. 3 (2011): 435-449. For a more extensive account of the activities of Kurdish women see Hasan Cemal Kürtler (Istanbul: Doğan Kitapçılık), 2003.
88 Çaha, “The Kurdish Women’s Movement: A Third-Wave Feminism within the Turkish Context,” 441.
project and the Turkish feminist movement.\textsuperscript{90} In particular, Yüksel explains that “the feminist movement in Turkey has disregarded and/or sidelined the experiences of Kurdish women,” while failing to offer a self-reflective critique regarding the faults of the Kemalist perspective.\textsuperscript{91} Yüksel’s interviews with nine Kurdish women identified not only the experiences of marginalization felt by women interacting with the Turkish women’s movement, but also differing perspectives regarding their positionality as feminists and their interactions with the prevailing women’s movement in Turkey. One of Yükel’s participants notes:

[In the 1980s, the Turkish feminist movement] spoke of a political organization and liberation that included all women. But this turned out not to be possible in practice. First of all, Turkish feminists did not touch on the relationship between sexism and racism on this soil where racism and all sorts of discrimination are deep-rooted and where they have been started to be talked about anew, and where there are multi-lingual/cultural/ethnic identities. They did not see that there was experienced a difference between different ethnic identities and between women of oppressing and oppressed nations. They assumed that the common denominator of being oppressed as women was enough. Secondly, although the existence of classes was recognized, they were forgotten and they supposed that they addressed all women. Yet it was limited to educated, middle-class women.\textsuperscript{92}

Kurdish women organized around multiple activities during the 1990s, including the publication of journals, participation in protests and the development of CSOs for women. During the second half of the 1990s, Kurdish women expressed their political activism through the publication of magazines such as \textit{Roża} in 1996, followed by \textit{Jujin, Jin u Jiyan} (Women and Life), \textit{Yaşamda Özgür Kadın} (Free Women in Life), \textit{Özgür Kadının Sesi} (Free Woman’s Voice), and \textit{Ji Bo Rizgariya Jina} (For the Emancipation of Women).\textsuperscript{93} As Çaha (2011) notes, in her discursive analysis of Kurdish Women’s journals, and in particular the journal \textit{Roża}, these publications reflect the characteristics of a third-wave feminist movement, in that the women involved sought to distance

\textsuperscript{90} Yüksel, “The Encounter of Kurdish Women with Nationalism in Turkey,” 777.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid., 789-791.
\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., 792.
\textsuperscript{93} Çaha, “The Kurdish Women’s Movement: A Third-Wave Feminism within the Turkish Context,” 435.
their experiences from Turkish women’s movement and align their experiences more closely with the black feminist movements of the United States and Europe. In doing so, the publications sought to identify that by solely articulating women’s oppression through the lens of a Kemalist nationalist project, one could not understand the dual oppression of subordination Kurdish women experienced in Turkey.

Moreover, the case of the Cumartesi Annleri (Saturday Mothers) was an example of women collectively coming together to articulate their demands within the public sphere. Inspired by the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina, the Saturday Mothers began silently protesting the disappearances and murders of their sons and daughters in Galatasaray Square of Istanbul on May 27, 1995. These mothers silently demonstrated every Saturday, holding pictures of their children for over 200 weeks, until police prevented the group from gathering. Most of the mothers lost their children between 1980 and 1996 when more than 400 individuals disappeared when the Turkish state employed counterinsurgency efforts against the PKK and Kurdish civilians. Despite police attempts to remove Saturday Mothers from protesting, they have continued their peaceful protest in Istanbul for over 17 years.

The Kurdish Women’s movement has organized a number of women’s organizations and have been active in political parties with a large Kurdish constituency in Turkey. For example, KAMER, a women’s organization originally established in the southeastern region of Turkey to combat violence and discrimination against women has, since 1997, expanded to twenty-three cities.

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throughout Turkey. Additionally, organizations such as DIKASUM, Kardelen, Selis, and VAKAD focus on combatting violence, discrimination and other difficulties faced by Kurdish women.

The Kurdish Women’s Movement provides a unique perspective into specific demographic differences not only in formal educational levels but raises important questions regarding the promotion of particular forms of education in Turkey. Within the general context of education amongst Kurdish men and women, Hoşgör and Smits (2002) note:

With regard to education level, there are large differences between Turks and Kurds. About one quarter of the Kurdish males and more than 70 per cent of the Kurdish females have not completed primary education. For the Turks these percentages are 7 and 22 per cent, respectively. Only 2.8 per cent of the Kurdish males and 0.5 per cent of the Kurdish females have more than secondary education, against more than 10 per cent of the Turkish males and almost 5 per cent of the Turkish females.

Hoşgör and Smits’ analysis is important because it not only highlights the distinctively large gap in educational access between Turks and Kurds, but also identifies that a problematic gap also exists between Kurdish men and women. Challenges regarding access to education are compounded within the Kurdish community by education and language policies prohibiting education in a language other than Turkish. This is a particularly salient issue due to the role Kurdish women play in transmitting the Kurdish language to younger generations. By this logic, the motivation to educate Kurdish women, particularly in the Turkish language, is complicated by the belief that the “education of Kurdish women in Turkish will sever the language tie between them and the next generations.”

98 Ömer Çaha The Kurdish Women’s Movement: A Third-Wave Feminism within the Turkish Context,” 442.
Entering the 21st Century: Women’s CSOs and Non-Formal Education

Education has played an important role in the history of women’s movements and CSOs throughout Turkey. However, as stressed in the 1997 NGO Report on the Implementation of CEDAW in Turkey, “the main obstacle in the way of women’s human rights is the lack of women’s awareness of what their rights are and the absence of effective means for their enforcement. A meaningful implementation of CEDAW in Turkey requires widespread, concrete action-programs to support and empower women in dealing with the discrimination they face in their daily lives.”99 By the late 1990s, to counter this lack of awareness, a number of women-led CSOs established education and training programs and began to develop their own materials for empowerment training. These organizations began to both implement the use of adult education techniques and prioritize participatory methods such as learning by experience, learning from peers and role-playing.100 By doing so, education coordinators in women-led CSOs have sought to not only develop skill-sets through adult education programs, but have also focused on increasing solidarity amongst women and creating a heightened awareness of women’s rights related to their bodies, marriage, divorce, maternity, childbirth, domestic violence, inheritance and political participation.101

According to Nüket Kardam (2005), non-formal women’s education programs in Turkey can be divided into three categories:

1) Programs that focus on skills training such as literacy, income generation, adaptation to city life;
2) Programs that focus on self-empowerment, investigation of the social construction of gender roles, and long term collective action; and

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3) Gender sensitivity training for public organizations, such as labor unions, political parties, or municipalities.\textsuperscript{102}

Despite the steps that have been taken toward improving women’s rights and the education of women’s rights in Turkey, research from the beginning of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century in Turkey indicates that important progress still needs to be made. As Emine Bozkurt highlights in the European Commission’s 2005 report on Turkey:

There has been little progress regarding women’s rights, although the entry into force of the new Penal Code delivers some important improvements, as reported last year. The main areas of concern for women in Turkey continue to be domestic violence, “honour killings,” a high illiteracy rate, and low participation in Parliament, local representative bodies and labor market.\textsuperscript{103}

As Serpil Sancar (2000) explains, women’s education is a wide-spread field in Turkey: Civil society organizations had been successful in making education programs as wide-reaching as possible, yet while a number of challenges regarding their development appear to be similar across women’s education programs, many important differences have emerged.\textsuperscript{104} These differences, as well as the promotion of women’s education are part of a “highly politicized agenda in Turkey…[reflecting] some of the most debatable and disputed issues of modern Turkish politics.”\textsuperscript{105}

Among the lingering challenges is the question of how to create education and training materials and implement educational programs that meet the needs of diverse women and girls at the national and local levels. While international and national discourse continues to highlight the importance of

\textsuperscript{102} Nüket Kardam, \textit{Turkey’s Engagement with Global Women’s Human Rights}, 88. Kardam notes that other studies have classified these groups based off of the “values” they espouse, consequently putting them into Kemalist (those supporting the reforms of Ataturk), Islamist (those supporting women’s role in Islam), and Feminist (those attempting to dismantle patriarchal attitudes). See Simel Esim and Dilek Cindoğlu, “Women’s Organizations in the 1990s: Predicaments and Prospects,” \textit{Middle Eastern Studies}, 35, (1999): 178-188.


\textsuperscript{105} Mine Göğüş Tan, Women, Education and Development in Turkey, in \textit{Education in Multicultural Societies—Turkish and Swedish Perspectives}, (eds.) Marie Carlson, Annika Rabo and Fatma Göök, Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, Transactions, 18 (Stockholm 2007), 119-120.
women and girl’s education, confusion surrounding the purpose of this education, how it should be constructed, and who should be considered an educator remains. Mine Tan (2007) highlights responses from a meeting of NGOs regarding what should constitute the principles of non-formal education:

What is going to be our main purpose? Empowerment? Literacy training? Certification? Communication skills? Consciousness-raising? Teaching human rights of women? Better child care? Or fostering economic development? Do we want education for ourselves or for the betterment of the nation-state? As long as we don’t have common goals we’ll have problems in fostering common strategies.  

The challenge of fostering common strategies and establishing a “common thread” amongst women’s CSOs has also been debated. While many program coordinators have argued that there is great strength in “reducing differences,” identifying a comprehensive definition of “gender,” “gender issues” or “gender mainstreaming” is complex and highly contested. At a meeting coordinated for CSOs in Ankara on the topic of “Empowerment through Education” one participant asked, “Can everyone see from the same perspective?” Because gender inequalities are lived and contested across complex, economic, cultural, and political dimensions, it may be difficult to establish a common framework regarding conditions of inequality in Turkey.

Furthermore, common ways of “doing gender” often reproduce existing gender norms rather than relationships which create opportunities for transformative gender justice. This is

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109 Sancar, Eğitim Yolayla Güçlenme, 57.
particularly true of women’s human rights projects that are “externally-imposed,” which are seen to appeal to “outsiders” at the expense of the nation-state, or in the name of European Union politics, as has often been the case in Turkey. For example, at the “Empowerment through Education” meeting, a number of participants asked whether the education materials that were created were appropriate in the contexts they were being used. One participant explained that the education felt “imposed upon” as a result of the “popularity of human rights” not only by foreigners, but also by rich members of Turkish society and individuals hired to advertise democracy.

Kenan Çayır (2007) argues that the conceptualization of human rights in government-sponsored training seminars employs pedagogical approaches that “remain at the cognitive level rather than being transformative.” Human rights education has often been positioned, particularly in training seminars, as an external legalistic discourse, which is only necessary to learn for the process of EU acquis. Consequently, in training seminars, including gender mainstreaming projects geared at male governmental officials, participants gain the cognitive knowledge of international human rights laws. However, because these programs do “not require any attitudinal or behavioral changes,” participants often invoked the “special circumstances” of Turkey during seminars when confronted with examples of human rights abuses, actions which limit the transformative potential of these types of training and education.

The term “externally-imposed” is not limited to the international community, but reflects geographic, educational, race and class-related differences as well. In reflecting on the experience of

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114 Eğitim Yoluyla Güçlenme, 60.
115 Ibid., 234.
university professors leading education programs in Gazientep, another participant said that the women educators had the air of a professor and spoke to participants in a didactic manner. She noted, “We’re people too. If you listen to me, I will also listen to you.” In balancing the interests of self-created materials versus institutionalized management of the education materials, questions have emerged regarding whether or not the materials “speak” to or “represent” education and training program participants. Consequently, in developing the materials, others have questioned whether standardized educational philosophies should be employed or whether the materials should emerge from and focus on the direct experiences of women in the program.

Moreover, although “establishing a network” and creating a center for communication between various groups has been frequently identified as important for women-led CSOs in Turkey, these organizations have also expressed that they are “not used to doing” effective cross-organizational communication. Additionally, some women’s organizations have identified a certain level of “territoriality” and “self-centeredness” among various NGOs in Turkey. In her recent interviews with CSOs in Turkey, Tan (2007) highlights one such comment:

There’s a lot that is going on in the name of women’s education. Not many of the operating groups are willing to share their assets or knowledge, though. They want to be their own boss: Let it be small but let it be mine. That is the philosophy.

A number of other issues emerged in both the Empowerment through Education meeting (2000) as well as Tan’s interviews with CSOs that will be further explored through this project. First, the location of educational programs has emerged as an important problem regarding women’s human rights education in Turkey. While Stromquist (2013) explains that non-formal education

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117 Gazientep is located in the southeastern Anatolian region of Turkey.
118 Eğitim Yoluyla Güçlenme, 47.
119 Ibid., 50-53.
120 Ibid., 6-7, 69.
121 Ibid., 26.
programs often provide locations that improve the accessibility of these programs to women, there is little research regarding the types of locations that are more effective in ensuring access to women’s adult education. In Turkey, there is little discussion in the academic literature regarding the specific challenges women faced as a result of attending non-formal women’s human rights education programs in locations that were not organized by the state; however, some literature has suggested that locations owned or operated by state-run institutions have been perceived by women’s husbands as less threatening, “safer” places, thus facilitating women’s ability to attend these education and training programs. I argue that the challenges associated with location must be given further examination, particularly the impact of location on access to and long-term viability of women’s adult education programs for organizations who do not have the financial or institutional support of the state.

Additionally, Robeyns (2010) argues that research related to gender should increase their focus on the relationships between care giving and leisure, and their subsequent effects on women’s educational opportunities. For example, a number of representatives at the Ankara meeting in 2000 raised the challenges associated with childcare and the opportunity to take part in educational and training programs. Even when the programs were held during times that were more amenable to women’s schedules, the absence of childcare locations or individuals to provide childcare complicated long-term participation for women in many educational programs.

126 Sancar, Eğitim Yoluyla Güçlenme, 24-49.
Research has focused on the challenges of monitoring and evaluating women’s programs, such as the difficulty of conceptualizing the impact, particularly if the goal is “women’s empowerment” and budgetary concerns. However, despite these challenges, most research continues to promote the importance of establishing evidence of the impact of gender programs on their participants. As Rai (2002) explains, the debates surrounding how to appropriately monitor and evaluate gender programs can create problematic divisions within the women’s movement.

Perhaps the most frequently cited problem for developing women’s education programs at the “Empowerment through Education” meeting was the lack of opportunity, resources, and time to effectively monitor and evaluate implemented programs. Although monitoring was recognized as a crucial step in providing evidence of the effectiveness of their programs, participants frequently noted that “[i]f we were able to continue the projects, we could monitor them,” or “[w]ithout money, we gave up on the opportunity to monitor.” Some participants mentioned that due to the strong informal relationships established with participants in the community, they were able to informally monitor participants’ progress over time; however, the very same informal nature was identified as an impediment to “reporting results” to external organizations or funding institutions. In addition to time and money, concerns related to the monitoring and evaluation of projects also concerned whether the materials were pedagogically sound and appropriate in local contexts. As there were “so many [education and training] materials” for programs to select from, identifying

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129 Sancar, Eğitim Yoluyla Güçlenme, 22 and 69.
130 Ibid., 20.
131 Ibid., 26-27 and 63.
whether selected programs were actually effective for participants was a key issue that had not been, and could only be addressed through more extensive program monitoring. It is within this historical and political environment that women-led CSOs continue to develop women’s education and training programs. Studies, such as Nüket Kardam’s (2005) analysis of education and training programs in Turkey provide an important framework for understanding the variety of women’s organizations and the impact of training on the participants. In addition to Kardam’s study, there are a number of case studies that have focused on one or two civil society organizations that are working on women’s education. In completing this project, I sought to expand on these important works by more closely examining women’s adult education and training programs in Turkey from the perspectives of education program coordinators. As Kardam notes, “the sustainability of the projects is of utmost importance.” Understanding how educators and project organizers navigate an educational environment comprised of state and international actors to sustain their educational programs was a chief goal of this study.

Moreover, through this project, I sought to prioritize the processes of developing educational programs directed at women rather than their outputs or impact. Implementation

132 Sancar, Eğitim Yoluyla Güçlenme, 47.
133 Nüket Kardam, Turkey’s Engagement with Global Women’s Human Rights, 82-107.
135 Nüket Kardam, Turkey’s Engagement with Global Women’s Human Rights, 104.
matters and has an identifiable link to program outcomes as well as sustainability over time. By prioritizing the experiences of individuals who have been crucial to the process of implementing women’s education programs in Turkey, I sought to contribute to the literature on women’s education programs by providing insight into the ways organizations are able to maintain viability as well as the elements that impact the progress of those organizations. By completing this project, I seek to let “women’s voices be heard, locating the social and cultural determinants of gender relations and their reproduction” through the implementation of women’s education programs in Turkey.

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Chapter Five:

Critical Reflections on the Limits of Economic Mobility for Women in Job-Skills and Occupational Courses

Low levels of female labor force participation and gender differences in employment have been identified as obstacles to the achievement of gender equality in Turkey. According to a 2013 report published by the Women’s Labor and Employment Initiative Platform (KEIG), the employment rate of men (64 per cent) is nearly three times higher than employment rate of women (22 per cent), while the number of women not participating in the formal labor force is two and a half times that of men.1 Whereas Turkey has been considered one of the fastest-growing economies and is currently the 17th largest in the world,2 women in Turkey remain “economically marginal.”3 Research on the topic indicates that opportunities for women do not seem to be improving: Although Turkey was ranked 105 out of 135 countries in the 2006 World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report, by 2012 its rank had fallen to 124 and by 2015 it ranked 130 out of 145 countries.4

In recent years, policy makers have sought to implement mechanisms to both promote and increase women’s employment in Turkey. For example, in its National Employment Strategy, the Turkish government identified its official female labor force participation target rate for 2023 as 38 per cent.5 Additionally, in 2008, the General Directorate of Women’s Status and Issues (KGSM) published the Gender Equality National Action Plan (2008-2010). Two years later, the Prime

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2 World Bank, Turkey: Evaluating the Impact of İŞKUR’s Vocational Training Programs, Human Development Sector Unit Europe and Central Asia (August 2013), vii.
Ministerial Circular 2010/14 entitled “Increasing Women’s Employment and Achieving Equal Opportunity,” outlining concrete steps to be taken in the implementation of the KGSM Action Plan was published. Chief among these steps is the provision of vocational, in-service and job skills trainings, as well as the provision of child care centers in both public and private workplaces in line with Labor Law 4875.6

Both in Turkey and elsewhere, non-formal, vocational and job skills training programs have been widely promoted as being instrumental to increasing women’s economic opportunities in the labor force as well as the overall productivity of a nation’s citizens.7 Since women have historically been excluded from institutions of both education and employment,8 the courses offered by these training programs are considered crucial to creating long-term, sustainable economic growth by increasing employability and encouraging income-earning opportunities9 and strengthening women’s rights and gender equality.10 While program advocates have touted these programs for their potential to create positive, long-lasting improvements in both women’s lives and a nation’s economy, recent studies suggest that these programs should be promoted with caution, as their success is often largely determined by factors overlooked in such programs, such as the guarantee of employment or

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6 See Prime Ministerial Circular in Appendix F.
whether they include recruitment and guidance components. Although these considerations are important for effectively coordinating initiatives to increase women’s labor force participation, they continue to receive limited attention and treatment in policy reports and program evaluations.

In this chapter, I examine women’s experiences and their reflections on coordinating or conducting job-skills, training and occupational courses throughout Turkey. I begin with a discussion of the effects of neoliberal economic policies on the Turkish economy. Then, I discuss women’s experiences with job-skills and occupational courses. The women participating in this study have worked with more than 24 women-led civil society organizations throughout Turkey. Their experiences raise three important areas for analysis. First, women argued that the potential effectiveness of these courses has largely been constrained by the absence of women in decision-making mechanisms and the growing influence of the government’s ‘neopatiarchal approach’ to women, gender and the family. Second, from their personal experiences, participants made a number of recommendations for improving the efficacy of job-skills and occupational programs geared towards women. Finally, women in this study caution policy makers against the continued promotion of courses as they are currently designed and argued that while education and training remains highly valued in Turkey, they are losing their value through the ineffectual coordination of job-skills and occupational courses.

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Impact of Neoliberal Policies on the Economy and the Gendered Welfare State in Turkey

In Chapter Two, I argued that the current scope and limitations of adult education policies cannot be adequately understood without an examination of their transformation within the context of globalization. Recent literature has linked globalization “to the historically-specific (post-1989) hegemony of neoliberal discourse that is reworking nation-state power and the rhetorics and practices of development.”\(^{12}\) Within this framework, globalization has been defined in terms of global economics, seen as “denoting in a particular way the transformation of capitalism as a mode of production.”\(^{13}\) Globalization has been considered both the product and consequence of factors such as the emergence of a global economy, the development of transnational linkages between economic units and the rescaling of governance through treaties and the emergence of multi-lateral institutions such the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).\(^{14}\)

In Turkey, scholars suggest that the neoliberal era began with the decision to shift from a form of “mixed capitalism” to a free market economy in January of 1980, a move that was solidified following the military coup in September of that same year.\(^{15}\) This transition was followed by a restructuring of economic policies within Turkey, a shift to market-oriented policies and the

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\(^{13}\) Torres, “Political Sociology of Adult Education,” 14.

\(^{14}\) One of the consequences of neoliberal capitalism has emerged in recent trends that indicate that improved living conditions have been accompanied by increasing wealth disparities. For example, recent reports indicate that the richest eight percent of the world’s population earn half of the world’s income, while the remaining 92 percent of people earn the other half. While the Global North has increasingly been affected by the issues such as increasing unemployment, reduced welfare spending, declining working conditions and the movement of transfer of industrial production to lower cost countries, at the same time conditional development funding programs imposed by multilateral organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank have effectively forced countries of the Global South to follow the neoliberal path to industrialization. See Manuel Castells, *End of Millennium,* (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2010); Branko Milanovic, “Global Income Inequality by the Numbers: In History and Now—An Overview,” *World Bank Working Paper 6259* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2012); David Held and Anthony McGrew, *The Global Transformations Reader: An Introduction to the Globalization Debate* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003).

 emergence of financial liberalization policies under the guidance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Yeldan (2002) argues that the decade of the 1990s was a “lost decade” for Turkey, where the economy suffered from “mini cycles of growth-crisis-stabilization,” periods of renewed, “artificial” growth, and high inflation rates that were at about 65-70 per cent at the first half but peaked at around 80-90 per cent by the end of the decade.¹⁶

The book, The Ravages of Neoliberalism: Economy, Society and Gender (2002), was published as a joint effort by economists and social scientists in Turkey to highlight the negative consequences of neoliberalism and globalization, particularly on the working class, poor farmers, the urban poor and women in Turkey. In the book, Ercan argues that, by monitoring and encouraging the restructuring of Turkish economic policy, the IMF and the World Bank ultimately contributed to the instability and fragility of the Turkish economy in the later half of the 1990s.¹⁷ Moreover, according to Yeldan, Turkey’s economic crisis in the first years of the 21st century could be directly attributed to an IMF-led disinflation program implemented in the year 2000.¹⁸ The program, which included both a stabilization component and structural adjustment policies, was implemented with the goal of decreasing inflation from 63 per cent in 1999 to single-digit numbers by the end of 2002. While the program was lauded internationally,¹⁹ by February of 2001 the Turkish economy moved into severe crisis, with the rate of inflation increasing to 89 per cent by the end of the year. As Yeldan argues,

¹⁸ Yeldan, “On the IMF-Directed Disinflation Program in Turkey.”
¹⁹ Balkan and Savran highlight the context surrounding the implementation of this program, referring to it as “one of the most comical episodes in the annals of economic policy-making.” They note that the program was so widely supported that Gazi Erçel, the governor of the Central Bank of Turkey at the time, was selected the “Central Bank governor of the year” by Euromoney. The collapse of the program ultimately led to Erçel’s resignation from the Central Bank just days after the eruption of the crisis. See Neşecan Balkan and Sungur Savran, “Introduction,” xiv-xv.
this crisis occurred despite the fact that Turkish authorities were “clearly successful in maintaining program targets both in exchange rate administration and monetary control, as well as attaining fiscal targets.”

As Ecevit (2013) explains, the negative impact of neoliberalism and globalization on the Turkish economy greatly influenced discussions regarding social policy and the welfare state in Turkey during the 2000s. While the effects of the economic crisis of 2001 were widespread and deleterious for men and women alike, numerous scholars have highlighted the particularly devastating effects of neoliberalism, globalization and the shift of the welfare state on women in Turkey. Over the past decade, Turkey has been recognized for its achievements as an emerging market, with a per capita income that has nearly tripled, exceeding $10,500. However, more recently, concerns have been raised regarding current economic growth as well as the relative strength of Turkey’s legal and financial institutions. A World Bank report (2014) has noted that despite improvements in trade, finance and basic public services, Turkey remains a country of “unequal opportunities.” In particular, with a large gender gap and declining female participation rates, Turkey is one of the few countries departing from the trend of increasing female participation in the

labor force.\textsuperscript{25} Table Six highlights the results of the nationwide Household Labor Force Survey during the years 1990-2011:

**Table Six: The State of Labour Force and Employment of the Population Aged 15 and Older (Turkey, 2011)\textsuperscript{26}**

| Years | Women | | | Men | | |
|-------|-------| | | | | |
|       | Non-institutional | Labor Force | Labor Force Participation Rate | Employed | Employment Rate | Non-institutional | Labor Force | Labor Force Participation Rate | Employed | Employment Rate |
| 1990  | 18,045 | 6,160 | 34.1 | 5,637 | 31.2 | 17,556 | 13,990 | 79.7 | 12,901 | 73.5 |
| 1995  | 20,787 | 6,427 | 30.9 | 5,958 | 28.7 | 20,388 | 15,858 | 77.8 | 14,628 | 71.7 |
| 2000  | 23,295 | 6,188 | 26.6 | 5,801 | 24.9 | 22,916 | 16,890 | 73.7 | 15,780 | 68.9 |
| 2001  | 23,769 | 6,451 | 27.1 | 5,969 | 25.1 | 23,389 | 17,040 | 72.9 | 15,555 | 66.5 |
| 2002  | 24,214 | 6,760 | 27.9 | 6,122 | 25.3 | 23,827 | 17,058 | 71.6 | 15,232 | 63.9 |
| 2003  | 24,652 | 6,555 | 26.6 | 5,891 | 23.9 | 24,260 | 17,086 | 70.4 | 15,256 | 62.9 |
| 2004  | 24,293 | 5,669 | 23.3 | 5,047 | 20.8 | 23,251 | 16,348 | 70.3 | 14,585 | 62.7 |
| 2005  | 24,686 | 5,750 | 23.3 | 5,108 | 20.7 | 23,673 | 16,704 | 70.6 | 14,959 | 63.2 |
| 2006  | 25,080 | 5,916 | 23.6 | 5,258 | 21.0 | 24,094 | 16,836 | 69.9 | 15,165 | 62.9 |
| 2007  | 25,480 | 6,016 | 23.6 | 5,356 | 21.0 | 24,513 | 17,098 | 69.8 | 15,382 | 62.7 |
| 2008  | 25,855 | 6,329 | 24.5 | 5,595 | 21.6 | 24,917 | 17,476 | 70.1 | 15,598 | 62.6 |
| 2009  | 26,317 | 6,851 | 26.0 | 5,871 | 22.3 | 25,369 | 17,898 | 70.5 | 15,406 | 60.7 |
| 2010  | 26,740 | 7,383 | 27.6 | 6,425 | 24.0 | 25,801 | 18,257 | 70.8 | 16,170 | 62.7 |
| 2011  | 27,273 | 7,859 | 28.8 | 6,973 | 25.6 | 26,320 | 18,867 | 71.7 | 17,137 | 65.1 |


As evidenced by Table Seven (following page), when examining the data by region, the differences in female labor participation rates become much more pronounced:

\textsuperscript{25} Gülay Toksöz, “The State of Female Labour in the Impasse of the Neoliberal Market and Patriarchal Family,” 52.

\textsuperscript{26} According to the most recent statistics published by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), women’s employment rate is 26.8%. Due to new regulations done to comply with the European Union, the Institute cautions making comparisons of Household Labor Force Survey Datasets created before and after February of 2014.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>İBBS-SRE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>WOMAN</th>
<th>MAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Labor Force Participation (%)</td>
<td>Unemployment Rate (%)</td>
<td>Employment Rate (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Istanbul</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Marmara</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aegean</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Marmara</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Anatolia</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>44.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediterranean</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Anatolia</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Black Sea</td>
<td>54.7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Black Sea</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North-eastern Anatolia</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-eastern Anatolia</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>42.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-eastern Anatolia</td>
<td>36.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Tokşöz (2012) argues that women’s low rates of participation in the labor force can be explained by the limited nature of industrialization as well as the influence of both public and private patriarchy in Turkey. She explains that rapid economic growth has not been accompanied by growth in the labor market. The low demand for labor and the growth in the working age population is further complicated by gender segregation in the labor markets. These factors have created a scenario where women experience high rates of unemployment or, due to their difficulty the face in securing employment in positions that have traditionally been considered ‘male,’ are only

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able to find work in the informal sector. Toksöz summarizes the implications of the nature of labor supply in Turkey both on women's participation in the labor force as well as on the struggle to achieve gender equality:

In countries where the labour market is tight, that is, where labour supply is limited, women's participation in the labour force is encouraged and supported. The attitude of the State as the representative of the public patriarchy loosens due to the employers' demand for female labour and women's struggle for gender equality. Given that the State has developed public policies for care services and demand for labor is high enough to push wages up, patriarchal structures that keep women at home tend to dissolve and women become essential actors in labour markets. In Turkey, on the other hand, the existence of a large mass of males ready to work under any condition leads employers with a patriarchal mentality to prefer male labour. In this way they can also avoid all expenses related with child bearing and rearing, responsibilities connected with women workers. Consequently, males constitute the major source of cheap and long-term labor in Turkey.²⁸

The challenges regarding women's participation in the labor force in Turkey are further compounded by the ‘gendered nature’ of the Turkish welfare state. Due to the limited access to welfare benefits or their protection experienced by large segments of the population, Turkey has been identified as a minimalist welfare state.²⁹ Buğra (2012) explains that the Turkish welfare state shares many characteristics with the Southern European model.³⁰ Specifically, Buğra and Keyder (2006) identify those characteristics as: a highly fragmented social security system, limited social assistance, informal employment and an informal labor market structure that is comprised largely of self-employment, unpaid family workers and a health and pension system that is only accessible to

those who are formally employed. These characteristics are important to highlight, because, in the absence of formal social protection mechanisms, informal institutions—including strong familial connections, religious organizations and the community—become vital to the provision of welfare. According to Saniye Dedeoğlu (2013), the nature of the Turkish welfare state and government policies have “implicitly” served to both maintain the centrality of familial connections in individual’s lives and reinforce the position of women in Turkey as care providers.

Due to what has been termed the “happy marriage” of patriarchy with neoliberalism in Turkey, informal sector jobs, such as home-based and care work, have become the most viable form of employment for women. This trend is reflected in reports that demonstrate the high disparities in participation in the informal labor market, where 61.6 per cent of the market is female while only 39.3 per cent of the market is male. As Dedeoğlu (2008) explains, this scenario is problematic for two reasons: First, informal work is largely unrecorded, leading to the invisibility of women’s labor in Turkey and second, women participate in the informal labor market without receiving job security or benefits.

As previously noted, efforts are being made to increase women’s participation in the labor force in Turkey. Chief among these efforts is the provision of vocational, in-service and job-skills

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33 Ibid., 9.
Many of these programs are conducted by Halk Eğitim Merkezleri (Public Education Centers), Community Centers, İŞKUR (the Turkish Employment Agency), and KOSGEB (Small and Medium Sized Industry Development Organization), in conjunction with local administrators and women’s civil society organizations. To date, there is limited research on the impacts of these programs on women’s lives. In 2013, the World Bank conducted an evaluation of the impact of İŞKUR’s vocational training programs on both men and women. According to the final report, the impact of vocational courses on employment was negligible, but the study showed a small, significant impact on the quality of employment participants later received. Since the study found that the training programs were generally comprised of the most educated job seekers (76 per cent of men and 73 per cent of women trainees had completed at least secondary education), it recommended expanding the programs to meet the needs of low-skilled workers, who account for most of the labor force in Turkey, as well as to continue the focus on women, who comprised 63 per cent of the trainees participating in the study.

The World Bank report provides an important starting point for evaluating the impacts of vocational training programs on employment in Turkey. Yet, the study does not account for previous criticisms of vocational training courses, particularly those programs geared toward women and girls. For example, recent reports suggest that the implementation of entrepreneurship training and other vocational programs, including the İŞKUR training courses, is highly gendered and tend to direct women towards fields that have traditionally been considered ‘women’s work’ such as

37 See Prime Ministerial Circular in Appendix F.
hairdressing, needlework and caring for the elderly and the sick.\textsuperscript{39} These occupations are largely considered unregistered jobs in the informal sector that do not provide benefits or job security. Furthermore, in contradiction with the results of the World Bank report, studies such as the 2013 report conducted by Women’s Labor and Employment in Turkey (KEIG) indicate that there are regional discrepancies in the data. Despite the fact that a majority of the trainees are women, when data is examined by region, there women’s work placements are far lower than and men’s.\textsuperscript{40} This data demands that more critical research be done to understand women’s experiences with job-skills and vocational courses.

In the following section, I explore the experiences of women, located in civil society organizations, who have developed and coordinated job skills training and occupational courses for women. The responses of program coordinators who participated in this study suggest that job-skills and vocational training programs, rooted in a neoliberal framework for economic development are indeed “part of hegemonic discourses which are classed and racialized, as well as gendered”\textsuperscript{41} that has been “used more as an agent of social control than an agent for change and transformative action”\textsuperscript{42} by reinforcing a neopatriarchal gender contract premised on women’s domestic roles. However, participants also highlight specific, actionable ways in which these programs have the potential to increase women’s opportunities to participate in the labor force in Turkey. Finally, participants highlight the necessity of taking more seriously the implementation of these programs as


\textsuperscript{40} Specifically, the KEIG report cites data from their 2012 study, which shows “major variation across regions in women’s and men’s work placements.” For example, in the region of Marmara, 23 per cent of women and 35 per cent of men were placed in jobs. However, in Southeast Anatolia, 8 per cent of women and 20 per cent of men were place is jobs. See Kadın Emek ve İstihdam Girişimi (KEIG), “Women’s Labor and Employment in Turkey,” 24-25.

\textsuperscript{41} Penny Jane Burke and Sue Jackson, Reconceptualizing Lifelong Learning: Feminist Interventions (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 2.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 10.
well as the implications of poorly implemented programs on the perceived value of vocational education initiatives.

Women’s Reflections on Job-Skills and Occupational Courses:

In the academic literature, adult education has been identified as an instrumental mechanism to increase the productivity of a nation’s citizens, to produce a more democratic civic culture and as a prerequisite for increased per capita income in developed and developing countries.\textsuperscript{43} The rise of neoliberalism has brought with it a “new common sense in education” driven by privatization, decentralization and accountability that extends to the education and training of adults, where top-down educational models pervade the institutional logic of organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank.\textsuperscript{44} By associating education both with economic progress and something that is universally desirable, transnational actors such as the IMF, the OECD\textsuperscript{45} and the World Bank have advanced a neoliberal development agenda by promoting funding for education projects as a tool of development aid.\textsuperscript{46} These strategies have been used to perpetuate a singular vision of adult education as an institution whose \textit{raison d'être} is the development of skills that contribute to capitalist productivity.

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Critics of this framework have challenged the dominant view of adult education as an instrumental tool for economic development; however, the consideration of gender within these frameworks continues to be largely neglected. Through their research, feminists have contributed to an important deconstruction of the gendered implications of neoliberal globalization. However, far less is known about women’s experiences of developing adult education programs and how these experiences may contribute to a deconstruction of the gendered implications of promoting adult education within a neoliberal framework of globalization.

Despite the promotion of women’s education as being integral to development, research in the field of adult education lacks a critical examination of how education policies have both “failed to effect structural change” in gender relations and “have actually served to perpetuate existing systems of social, economic and political stratification” for women and girls. While participants in the current study confirmed the evidence from previous research regarding the gendered nature of occupational and training courses in Turkey, their concerns indicated that the gendered nature of these courses was the result of more systematic challenges. For example, İŞKUR has been criticized for directing women towards courses that are traditionally considered ‘women’s work.’ Participants in this study expressed that this was a ‘natural’ consequence of the absence of women in decision-

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making positions managing these courses. One woman, who worked in Mamak, a small neighborhood within Ankara, but had done multiple projects in Sincan noted, “The biggest obstacle to these programs? All of these interventions that are related to women have been done by men. Women must be more active here, but that is difficult.”51 Another woman, located in Ankara, who had worked with multiple CSOs over the past 30 years explains:

If you are a young woman, you go to IŞKUR course and you can get some money and you learn a skill. It’s very attractive for a woman. But I am against these courses. Because who decides what type of training course will be offered for women? The men in IŞKUR. Men decide for women and men think that sewing or flower making is good for a woman. But this does not make women employable.52

Feminist researchers have long challenged the state-controlled institutionalization of economic policies and activities, demanding greater representation for women in the public sphere as well as political and economic agency for women in development projects. In particular, by exposing the adverse effects of structural adjustment policies on women as well as the exclusion of women from labor and vocational training in state-led top down approaches to economic development, feminist economists have underscored the invisibility of women’s experiences and their suffering within the global economy.53 In this study, women’s responses not only confirm that this research extends to the economic approaches embraced by Turkey, but also add to this research by highlighting the importance of women’s participation in decision-making mechanisms, including the

51 Interview, March 3, 2015, translated by author.
52 Interview, October 8, 2014, English.
management of job-training courses as crucial to both improving women’s rights and their economic agency.  

For these participants, women’s participation in deciding and managing the structure of courses had the potential to drastically change how the programs were conducted. However, for others, women’s exclusion from decision-making mechanisms and the absence of opportunities from these courses was indicative of the fact that the experiences and educational content of these programs not only intentionally reproduced gender ideologies and hierarchies but also privileged men’s access to the labor force at the expense of women. As one woman explained, within these programs, there were “a lot of efforts to keep women’s traditional roles in place.” This woman went on to explain that “these institutions don’t really care about women’s education.” Another woman, who worked on projects in the southeast region of Turkey shared and expanded on these sentiments:

There are no decision-making mechanisms for women. In reality, some of these training programs are just for show. If there is money, if there is a real opportunity, it goes to men. Because they believe that sooner or later these young girls will get married anyway, she will get something, they say. ‘Why would we invest in these women?’ That’s the way they look at these things. Let’s just get them married. Unfortunately there’s that type of perception and these type of problems limit our abilities.

Participants’ comments were consistent with previous evaluations of vocational training programs in Turkey that found that women were directed into gendered vocations that did not help

57 Interview, March 3, 2015, translated by author.
58 Interview, April 30, 2015, translated by author.
them find employment.\textsuperscript{59} However, their reflections on these programs also indicate that women continue to occupy a ‘secondary status’ in the labor market in Turkey, where women’s perceived ‘role in the family’ justifies their marginalization from employment opportunities.\textsuperscript{60} Furthermore, as the last participant suggests, while education and training continues to be widely promoted, in Turkey and elsewhere, patriarchal hegemony of the labor market both informs and influences the management and provision of these occupational courses, reinforcing women’s domestic roles through the content and types of educational opportunities afforded to them.\textsuperscript{61}

Historically, “top-down” institutional approaches to international development, which equate ‘development’ with ‘economic development’ have effectively ignored the root causes of gender disparities as well as the mechanisms for agency within development frameworks.\textsuperscript{62} The general policy assumption that women’s participation in job-skills and vocational training courses contributes to their increased access to employment is often accepted without reservation. This is easily identifiable in research, where education is often a key indicator in studies regarding women’s participation in the labor market.\textsuperscript{63} Yet, women participating in this study were concerned that the struggle to increase women’s participation in the labor force in Turkey had been overshadowed by the promotion of training programs. Women argued that reducing women’s underrepresentation in the labor force to the lack of skill and a deficit in training or education not only ignored the


\textsuperscript{62} Shirin M. Rai, “Gender and Development: Theoretical Perspectives,” 34; Chandra Talpade Mohanty, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses” 85.

patriarchal structures that defined and limited the scope of opportunities for women, but also shifted the blame for low labor force participation onto women participating in these courses. One participant explains how patriarchal structures have limited women’s opportunities, despite their enrollment in occupational and training programs:

There are many good examples of programs in Turkey but these are single examples and if you do not create a change in the whole society and in the community young women can go to a training course, sure but when she comes back what can she do? She cannot fight for herself alone. She is in an atmosphere and in this atmosphere many people, many institutions giving the same message: You are a housewife, you should be a housewife, you should have three children as our Prime Minister said you should do this, keep your house at home, you should learn how to keep your husband attached to your home. All these very conventional, very traditional messages. So you open a course that teaches women their rights but you are just a single institution and there are others, all very traditional, very patriarchal. You can’t change other institutions you can’t create other institutions when say family, state, education all others are saying the same words, giving the same message. It would be very difficult this way. Of course, I believe in education but giving a woman education or teaching them some skills is not enough. It’s just part of the whole thing. So I’m not like other people saying everything is about education. Just educate women and all the problems will be solved.  

Previous research indicates that one of the largest challenges to increasing women’s economic opportunities in Turkey has been the persistence of a ‘neopatriarchal’ state. Neopatriarchal states emerge when policies reflect both ‘modern and traditional institutions’ and where the state upholds a “patriarchal gender contract,” or a social relationship premised on the roles of male-breadwinner and female homemaker. Scholars, such as Dedeoğlu (2013) and Ozar (2013) show that in Turkey, a “surge” in the conservative nature of social relationships is reflected in the move towards family-centered policies, which continue to prioritize motherhood and marriage with the goal of keeping women at home to maintain traditional roles. This focus on family-

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64 Interview, October 8, 2014, English.
centered policies in lieu of policies that promote gender-equality indicates that patriarchal structures not only limits the scope of opportunities for women in the labor market but reflects the ways in which women’s employment continues to be marginalized in labor policies. Moreover, as one participant explains, the persistence of a neopatriarchal state also influences how women are seen as potential candidates in the labor market. She explains:

    The private sector doesn’t take women very seriously. Women’s projects, giving an education to women, women’s capacity to produce, their productivity. If the private sector doesn’t take women seriously, what can you do? They don’t do anything, they don’t want to push forward. For these reasons, the current system doesn’t work. From this perspective, I am criticizing these İŞKUR programs. These women are not becoming entrepreneurs, it’s impossible with the system as it is. Even I couldn’t even become an entrepreneur in this system. Entrepreneurship is not an easy thing. You need all of these different elements to be in place. But these are the types of challenges the state creates for women entrepreneurs.\(^{67}\)

The KEIG (2011) report on the status of women’s labor participation in Turkey confirms that the inability to take women seriously is just one of the many structural and systemic factors that limit the scope of opportunities available to women in the labor force but this inability is masked by policy approaches which focus solely on education and skills training. Perhaps more problematically, the authors of the same KEIG report argue that placing the focus on educational programs while ignoring other structural and systemic limitations allows institutions to shift the blame for low labor force participation onto women who have graduated and received certificates from these programs but were unable to find employment. When forced to respond to the discrepancy between the rates of women participating in courses and the ever-increasing number of women that are unemployed, authorities referenced the “laziness” of women or their “continuing beauty sleep” as the source of their limited participation in the labor force.\(^ {68}\) Furthermore, the extensive focus on education and training compounded by a failure to examine other influences on women’s labor force participation

\(^{67}\) Interview, January 22, 2015, translated by author.

masks the ways in which women’s opportunities for employment are also marginalized by cultural, ethnic, religious and class differences. As one participant, who has worked with vocational training programs in Istanbul for over 15 years explains:

The main methodology these trainers use is the belief that every woman can gain some equalizing economic power, but in reality, social power is the main source of these problems. It’s not just something related to one person. Look, there are good intentions with these programs, but when you do them in this way, you directly and indirectly create and recreate inequality. Economic power doesn’t bring woman freedom. It does improve it, it does open opportunities all over the world and in Turkey as well. So whatever the trainees get, however successful the training session is applied, it doesn’t matter if it doesn’t bring women freedom or if it doesn’t consider the issue of gender roles. When we are talking about equality, of course economic freedom is important but it’s only one site and one factor, it should be controlled the other factors that are more important. If we don’t, then economic power alone may create new discrimination cases, discriminated people, discriminated woman as well.69

Her comments reflect how, in the struggle against the detrimental effects of neoliberal globalization on women, there has and continues to be a tendency to homogenize women’s interests and women’s experiences within the “scattered hegemonies” of patriarchy and global capitalism to the detriment and further marginalization of women who experience multiple and intersecting forms of oppression.70 By continuing to examine forms of economic oppression and ignoring other hegemonic and oppressive structures, economic polices that encourage women’s participation through education and skills training obscure the experiences of women in various local contexts. Another woman discusses the implications of this practice by highlighting the experiences of women in the conservative areas of Tokat and Çankırı, who participated in training courses and attempted to sell their products in more affluent neighborhoods:

All of our products were originally sold on the local market. Then we wanted to sell these products at AVM (Alış Veriş Merkezleri, or Malls), so we went to the AVM in Ankara. Forum, Forum Outlet, there’s also one in Keçiören, and we also went to CEPA, Kentpark and Armada. We said, ‘We have women. They’ve received an education. They want to come

69 Interview, March 17, 2015, translated by author.
here and open a stand for their products.’ We thought that if we came and showed the products then the women would be able to sell these items. CEPA and Kentpark said, ‘We are not involved in this type of village work.’ Of course, these women wore headscarves. They come from Anadolu. Tokat and Çankırı are conservative areas. So Kentpark and CEPA say, ‘we are not involved in these type of projects.’ But Forum and Keçiören agreed. No problem, they said. For those reasons, we went to Forum and Keçiören.71

While economists have frequently referred to a ‘borderless world’ and the emergence of a ‘single, seamless unity’ without any barriers in the era of globalization,72 this participant’s comments force us to recognize that inveterate boundaries have been firmly established through the rise of neoliberal globalization and are demarcated not only by gender, but also by class, ethnicity and religious beliefs. Economic policies that seek to increase women’s labor force participation must not only recognize women’s limited access to the public sphere, but that the public sphere is comprised of multiple arenas, of which different women experience different levels of opportunity and ingress.

The participants in this study were critical of the current way in which many of the job-skill and training programs were managed. However, they also suggested a number of ways in which the current programs could be improved to engender women’s increased participation in the labor force. In the following section, I explore these recommendations.

**Improving Job-Skills and Occupational Courses for Women:**

Walters and Cooper (2011) argue that despite the increasing literature on the relationship between global knowledge economy and learning organizations as well as its effects on the development of new forms of knowledge and informal learning, the reality is that much of this new

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71 Interview, January 22, 2015, translated by author.
knowledge has been rendered invisible.\textsuperscript{73} Specifically, while feminist research has contributed to an important deconstruction of the gendered implications of neoliberal globalization, far less is known about women’s experiences developing adult education programs and how these experiences may contribute to a deconstruction of the gendered implications of promoting adult education within a neoliberal framework of globalization.\textsuperscript{74}

\textit{Course Methodology}

Participants offered a number of recommendations for the ways in which the current programs could be improved to benefit women in the program. For one woman, this process required changing the methodology so that courses recognized both the women’s experiences as well as the value of domestic labor. She explains:

From our own experiences, we know that woman learn things in these courses in a different way. First physically they have to live in a family environment and they feel like the courses often don’t relate to their own lives. It (the courses) can’t be someone coming and telling them what to do. Whatever training it is it must be connected to their own lives. For example, financial literacy. Whether they are rich or poor, they are living in a financial world and they are connected to these financial institutions in one way or another. You have to know about those things but usually women think this is not related to their own life but in fact its in the heart of their own life, so these issues are really related to their life and the training needs to reflect that. This is hard because sometimes these trainers think that mothers don’t know anything, but they know many things and sometimes the most important things is how to develop a common sense methodology.\textsuperscript{75}

In Chapter Two, I argued that adult education spaces are a product of gendered social relations and histories of marginalizing women’s experiences. Here, this participant argues that gendered social relations and histories of marginalizing women’s experiences have produced adult educational spaces that are both dislocated and disconnected from the realities of women’s experiences. While learning is a


\textsuperscript{74} Nelly P. Stromquist, “Gender Structure and Women’s Agency,” 59-75.

\textsuperscript{75} Interview, March 16, 2015, translated by author.
historically specific and socially situated process of knowledge production, the structure of programs discourages reflections on participants’ lived experiences of social inequality and difference. Mojab (2009, 2011) refers to this process as learning by dispossession, where projects may provide new skills and knowledge while simultaneously “disconnecting and dislocating both trainers and participants” from their material reality.

In her reflections on training trainers in India, Dorine Plantenga (2012) underscores the necessity of being accountable for one’s methodology in feminist popular education. She stresses the importance of continued reflection as well as co-responsibility (of both facilitators and individuals) for the learning process in training courses.76 Moreover, Plantenga outlines five guiding principles that she identifies as necessary to a feminist facilitating process. The first principle requires recognizing unequal power dynamics, not just in broader society but within the group of participants as well. The second underscores a focus on the ‘whole’ individual rather than focusing on any one, singular identity. The third principle, grounded in Freirean tradition, balances an analysis of injustice with the cultivation of spaces that “unveil opportunities for hope.”77 The fourth underscores the importance of individual ownership in the facilitation process. The fifth and final principle recognizes the need to use all senses in a manner that encourages individual and collective empowerment as well as transformative learning. In light of participants concerns in the current study, future studies and policy research should continue to examine the ways in which methodologies of feminist popular education may be useful in recognizing women’s lived experiences and allowing those experiences to both strengthen and guide the learning process.

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Additionally, her comments demonstrate the ways in which care labor continues to be marginalized by neoliberalism and global economic development policies. Feminist economists have challenged the traditional definition of labor in the current globalized economy, a definition that has also resulted in the invisibility of the economic contributions of women. Specifically, care labor, including child care, domestic labor and care for the sick or the elderly, has been overlooked and gone unrewarded by global economic development policies to the detriment of women. Statistics regarding national economic growth have failed to include care labor in economic policy and planning because domestic work, including care and household chores, has generally been unpaid work and has not been viewed or defined as “economic activity.” Consequently, women, who perform a disproportionate share of care and household labor, have not been counted as members of the national labor force. A similar trend has been identified in Turkey, where research indicates that women who are registered as ‘housewives’ and are considered “inactive,” are very active in informal market activities.

Furthermore, feminist economists have underscored the misnomer unskilled associated with labor provided by women. In their analysis of women in factory employment, Elson and Pearson (1981, 2011) discuss that the skills women often learn in the household, such as sewing and needlework, are transferrable to industrial work, but have often been identified as “unskilled” or

79 Ibid., 117.
80 Ibid., 115
“semi-skilled.” This practice has resulted in demeaning the type of labor women perform in factory settings, despite the fact that “technically similar” jobs performed by men are considered skilled. The authors argue that the semantics of unskilled labor are not only inaccurate, but also contribute to the “social invisibility” of women’s work, thereby reproducing the inferior nature and secondary status of women’s labor and employment. The participant’s comments here suggest that the invisibility of women’s work is both reproduced and reified in these educational programs, where trainers fail to acknowledge domestic and care labor as skilled, economic activity.

Other participants argued that care labor was disregarded not only in the methodology of courses but also in the failure to provide childcare services for women participating in the course. Previous research has shown that women’s increased participation in the labor force, coupled with the historical association of household labor as women’s responsibility, has resulted in women carrying the double burden of paid employment as well as care services. Elson (2011) argues that the stress of experiencing this double burden may not be explicitly reflected in national development indicators, but can be identified in the increased stress and illness that can be seen by women attempting to succeed in both the public and private spheres. National surveys in South Africa and Zimbabwe indicate that of the women who perform care labor, 80 per cent experienced a reduction in income. The challenges of this double burden are not only apparent in labor market statistics, but in this study as well, where care labor not only prevents women from participating in the labor force, but from taking courses as well. As one woman highlights:

84 Lourdes Beneria, “Accounting for Women’s Work: The Progress of Two Decades,” 42.
There are a number of other factors [affecting these programs]. For example, with women coming to the education courses. They’ll say, okay I’ll come, but who will watch my kid? If I am going for two hours where will I drop off my kid? The women want to come to the courses but cannot get away from their domestic duties. The most successful programs will have a set of classes for women but also do a separate program for children. So that women can come to the classes with their children. There, maybe the children can learn English, or they can play on the internet or with computers. It’s successful if the women can come with their children.\(^\text{87}\)

Robeyns (2010) argues that policy makers should focus their research on the relationship between care giving and women’s educational opportunities.\(^\text{88}\) Previous research on women’s non-formal education programs in Turkey underscored how the lack of childcare facilities was an obstacle to women’s attendance at these courses as well as their later participation in the labor market. Even when programs were held during times that were more amenable to women’s schedules, the absence of childcare locations or individuals to provide childcare complicated long-term participation for women in many educational programs.\(^\text{89}\) Public and private workplaces are required as set out in Labor Law no. 4875, but in reality, a comprehensive childcare policy still does not exist in Turkey.\(^\text{90}\) As a result, there remains a deficit of care services and care facilities, preschools and nurseries in workplaces.\(^\text{91}\) While the challenge of providing adequate care services to increase women’s participation in the courses continues for a number of programs, other organizations are currently building childcare services to meet this need. For example, at least two programs I visited provided child care services and two others were developing modular courses to

\(^{87}\) Interview, January 22, 2015, translated by author.
\(^{90}\) Yıldız Ecevit, “İş ve Aile Yaşamının Uzlaşılmıslması Bağlamında Türkiye’de Erken Çocukluk Bakımı ve Eğitimi.” In Ipek İlkaracan (ed.) İş ve Aile Yaşamını Uzlaştırmaya Politikalara İçinde (İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2011), 88-114.
train individuals in how to set up a childcare center in their local community to respond to this need. As one woman highlights:

One of the projects we are designing is a modular online education training program for people who want to be employed in healthcare services. We wanted this program to be set up in a way that it supports the ideology that childcare is not only the responsibility of women. So we put several items like we also put a program for the men and we also developed the idea into the program that saying gender training is not only needed for the trainees but it’s also important for the employers, especially the employers who will work in this service. For these groups we will have these sessions and we will try to put all these variations into the model as an online program.\textsuperscript{92}

Future studies must critically assess the ways in which neoliberal frameworks for economic development continue to marginalize the important role of care and household labor, and, in doing so, ignore the ways in which this labor adversely affects women’s participation in the labor force as well as their ability to participate in vocational and occupational courses. Moreover, as the participant indicates above, programs and economic policies must, in addition to providing better national care policies, learn how to “engage men in care work.”\textsuperscript{93} Doing so is not only important for understanding and combatting gender roles, stereotypes and cultural norms associated with care and household labor, but also for ensuring that care labor does not become “cast-off” by shifting the burden of care to poorer segments of the population, further marginalizing women of lower socio-economic classes.\textsuperscript{94}

\textit{Length and Impact of Courses}

Critics have argued that situating adult education as a tool to meet the technical-rational demands of global capitalism masks the potential it has for furthering a more socially just development. In particular, the forms of “gender-training” often promoted by transnational agencies

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\textsuperscript{92} Interview, March 17, 2015, translated by author.
\textsuperscript{93} Makina, “Caring for People with HIV,” 341-342.
continue to focus on formulaic, quantifiable, top-down quick fixes applied to contexts with the assumption that these forms of education will fix systemic or societal ‘problems.’ Jay Dolmage (2013) refers to the process as a retrofit, which he defines as “a quick and temporary fix to critical socio-spatial and economic conditions.”95 Through the process of retrofitting, institutional forces offer a ‘quick solution’ to a problem, which is presumed to be less expensive and less time-intensive than having to restructure the social, political, economic and educational systems that produce inequalities. In this way, as Dolmage argues, this approach can invest as little as necessary with the goal of gaining the greatest return.

While a retrofit may act as a correction to certain problems, may “measure up to new regulations,” and may even be well intentioned, it is reactive, mechanical and structured in a manner that ensures that other systemic inequalities will not change. In this study, many participants argued that the courses represented a sort of quick-fix or correction to women’s inequality in the labor force and were “ephemeral,”96 short-lived and while they often provided immediate skills that could be useful in the labor force, these courses failed to provide the type of long-term strategies necessary to ensure women’s success. As one woman explains:

These are short-lived courses but not causing a real change in women’s lives, all right? In these courses, IŞKUR should not only be teaching skills but at the same time they should be teaching that employability is important. But IŞKUR is not doing this, they are just teaching skills. But their responsibility is to increase the number of employed women so in these courses it shouldn’t only be about teaching skills but at the same time they must create this kind of understanding.97

Recent criticisms of vocational and job-skills training courses in Turkey have acknowledged the difference between skills-training and employability, particularly as they relate to women.

96 Interview, October 8, 2015, English.
97 Interview, October 8, 2015, English.
participants in these courses. For example, in a study conducted by the World Bank, participants in courses, such as the IŞKUR trainings, face barriers to employment that are not skill-related, but rather related to how to apply and secure employment. This challenge is further compounded by the criticism that there is a stark difference between the skills provided through the training courses and the technical skills currently in demand in the labor market. Moreover, although these courses focus on technical training skills, research suggests that the skills most highly valued by employers across Turkey are behavioral (e.g. teamwork, communication skills, problem solving) not technical. In reflecting on her own experience with entrepreneurial trainings, another participant touched on the implications of failing to account for the multiple skills that are necessary for women to become entrepreneurs, as well as how long-term strategies for these programs could improve the efficacy of these courses. As she explains, these courses must take into account the difference between training and experience to ensure their long-term success:

Entrepreneurship trainings have really expanded in Turkey. But we look at those programs and they are very heavy in training. They are two weeks and very heavy on everything in entrepreneurship. So when women finish and graduate, they think they will become an entrepreneur. So they set up a business, which is good, but after 1 ½ year almost 60 per cent of those are closed and in 3 years they are all closed, nothing remains. Because institutions don’t think. They don’t realize that these people might need answers after they set up their business. It’s then that they need the information or the support- but instead, they give it in a very concentrated period of time, 15 days or so. The trainings should be a continual process and you need to support them at different stages. Of course you can start with the 15 days and the create a mechanism to follow up after they set up the business. Plus, people always learn from each other- so there should be a mechanism so that they can learn from each other’s experiences. People learn more from their experiences than from their trainings or literature or instruction things.

In addition to the need for programs to incorporate training modules that would help job seekers navigate available jobs, improve their communication skills in the workplace and assist

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99 Interview, March 16, 2015, translated by author.
entrepreneurs after the initial start-up of their businesses, other participants highlighted the need for courses and mentorship programs that dealt with sexual harassment in the work environment. Over the last fifteen years, legislative reforms in Turkey have begun to recognize the occurrence of sexual harassment in the workplace and have shifted the burden of proof to the employer in cases of sex-based discrimination. ¹⁰⁰ However, these reforms have not altered the reality of women’s experiences with harassment in the workplace, where factors such as inadequate transportation services, proper street lighting, unsatisfactory security measures and the persistence of patriarchal norms adversely affect women’s long-term participation in the labor force. ¹⁰¹ One woman argued that these issues were exactly the reason why women needs to be more involved in the development of the courses as well as why gender equality needed to be built into occupational and training courses. She discusses these challenges in light of the changes her own organization was making, in order to incorporate women’s rights into training programs:

For our new courses, we are going to add a ten week version of women’s human rights training programs because many times these woman who get occupational trainings end up dropping out of the labor force because they cannot cope with the injustices they see. They actually need empowerment training not just to get the job but to be able to stay in the labor market. We are hoping with these 10 week trainings that we will be able to empower them need to stay in the labor market. ¹⁰²

Future research must continue to examine how gender equality initiatives can, and should be built into vocational and occupational courses. While these educational courses are often promoted within the general framework of gender equality, studies indicate that current policies and programs remain insufficient in transforming the existing structural and cultural inequalities that pervade the labor force and contribute to the reification of the gendered division of labor. Researchers must

ⁱ⁰² Interview, October 28, 2015, English.
continue to examine the ways in which gender equality and women’s rights modules can and must be incorporated into job-skills and vocational courses to not only increase female labor force participation, but also to ensure their persistence in the labor force by accounting for concepts of work/life balance, sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace. Such research is also necessary to exert greater pressure on companies and ensure compliance with labor laws and policies aimed at eliminating harassment and discrimination in the work environment.

Patriarchy and Constructing the Limits of Women’s Economic Place(s):

In the final section of this chapter, I examine the ways in which women’s opportunities can be limited by the boundaries of economic opportunity within a neopatriarchal state. Feminist scholars, particularly in the Marxist feminist literature on women’s work have examined the relationship between women’s work and exploitation within the context of globalization and neoliberal capitalism. These critiques extend to research that assumes women’s economy agency transfers to enhanced agency in other spheres. In particular, scholars such as Elson and Pearson (1981) and Koggel (2003) argue that these assumptions are over-simplistic in that they fail to account for the nature of market forces as well as how the socio-cultural context affects the process of integration.103

In light of these challenges, feminist activists have shifted their focus to identifying ‘safe spaces,’ where identity formation and collective activism could potentially occur. For example, since “women are the most likely advocates for their own advancement,”104 researchers have begun to highlight women-led civil society organizations as one of the few spaces where adult education that seeks to transform gendered social relations could occur. These sites may play an important role by

104 Nelly P. Stromquist, “Adult Education of Women for Social Transformation: Reviving the Promise, Continuing the Struggle,” 35.
creating “an alternative space” to the current structure of educational activities, which allow individuals to mobilize and collectively pressure transnational and state actors to improve gendered social relations.\textsuperscript{105}

However, as Nagar, Lawson, McDowell and Hanson (2002) note, spaces and scales are multiple, intersecting and socially and politically constructed.\textsuperscript{107} In the construction of ‘safe spaces’ for gender-transformative initiatives, feminist activists must begin to critically examine how these spaces are conceptualized and constructed in relation to social, political, cultural and economic processes. We must ask: In what ways can safe spaces become co-opted and their boundaries redefined within the context of globalization, neoliberal capitalism and public patriarchy? The participants in this study offered examples of the ways in which spaces can become coopted for economic gain, to the detriment of the women working within those spaces.

While a number of participants argued that local support, and, in particular, the presence of a female official (e.g., a muhtar) improved the likelihood that community spaces would be used for projects related to women’s employment, the impacts and opportunities for these programs were still largely constrained by men. For example, in discussing a project that ended in 2000, one participant explained how the influence of a muhtar’s husband ultimately led to the dissolution of what had been a successful employment project for women in a rural region of Turkey:

All of a sudden, the muhtar’s husband wanted to become involved in this work. Yani, this man, out of the blue, was interested in strengthening women’s workforce, by turning the women into workers and becoming the patron. We said, this won’t be done. The women here are happy and a few enterprises have emerged from this project. The man only went there to control the business. He wanted to make the women work for free. We completely objected to this. But unfortunately, because of the husband, the whole project was ruined.

\textsuperscript{105} Cathryn Magno, “Res Publica Revisited: Gendered Agency through Education,” 127-142.
\textsuperscript{107} Nagar et al., “Locating Globalization: Feminist (Re)readings of the Subjects and Spaces of Globalization,” 266.
This is the problem with masculinity. Even if there is a woman mubtar, her husband may go and ruin the practice. This is a real challenge. We developed the opportunity to prepare these women. We found the machines. We found the place. We found the teacher. A he is going to be the manager. How clever. Either way, the project ended shortly after.108

The participant went on to explain, through a different project located in the wealthy Istanbul neighborhood of Kadıköy that the “sudden” a project is successful, namely economically profitable, men in the community will venture to control or manage these spaces. She explains how an eight year program coordinated and managed entirely by women ended shortly after men seized control of the program’s management:

But then what happened? In 2008, the belediye109 looked at this project and saw how profitable it was so it became a cooperative of the belediye and the women became employees of the cooperative. When it began, women were their own managers. Now the belediye was the manager. The women were doing the same thing and they were getting paid but they were not the owners of the work. The previous project was much more collective. Women worked together and at the end of the day they shared the profits. Now the belediye controlled their work. Later the women quit the project because they objected to this change and it was closed down. Here is a perfect example of sustainability. In Turkey, if an initiative started by women is successful, some man who wants to manage it will come in and take over. This is our experience.110

Moving forward, researchers and activists examining the efficacy of job-skills and training courses must continue to critically examine the ways in which cultural, social, economic, ethnic and religious factors constrict women’s opportunities to participate in the labor force. As previously noted, economic policies continue to promote vocational courses as a retrofit without examining the social, political and economic systems that produce inequality in the labor market. The experiences of participants in this study demonstrate that the challenges associated with these programs are complex and cannot be explained away by women’s ‘laziness’ or ‘continuing beauty sleep,’ as official

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108 Interview, January 22, 2015, translated by author.
109 In Turkey, a “belediye” is the equivalent of a municipality.
110 Interview, January 22, 2015, translated by author.
reports have suggested. Rather, these reports must begin to recognize the ways in which women’s spaces have been co-opted by men once they are considered economically viable.

**Conclusion:**

In this chapter, I examined women’s experiences and their reflections about coordinating or conducting job-skills, training and occupational courses throughout Turkey. By framing the analysis with the context of the effects of neoliberal economic policies in Turkey, it is possible to identify the negative consequences of neoliberalism and globalization on the instability and fragility of the Turkish economy as well as the unique challenges experienced by different groups of women within this framework. Furthermore, because job-skills and vocational courses have largely been conceptualized and implemented within this dominant neoliberal discourse that equates development with economic progress, exploring the experiences of women who have worked with employment agencies to coordinate these courses rendered the limitations of these programs in increasing opportunities for women’s participation in the labor force more clearly understood and assessed.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research that demonstrates that job-skills and vocational courses tend to have a negligible effect on an individual's employment opportunities.\(^{111}\) This study differs from previous research in that it focuses on programs that have been coordinated with women-led civil society organizations and, according to participants in this study, the programs they coordinated were geared towards lower-socioeconomic populations and

populations of individuals who have lower formal educational levels.

This study also differs from previous research in that it employs a qualitative approach, allowing participants to not only express their opinions on why these programs were ineffective but also how these programs could be altered to improve their effectiveness. First, participants argued that the potential effectiveness of these courses has largely been constrained by the absence of women in decision-making mechanisms and the growing influence of the government’s ‘neopatriarchal approach’ to women, gender and the family. Women continue to experience exclusion, not only from the labor market but from political positions as well. Although women hold more political positions than they have in recent years, scholars and activists in Turkey argue that this change has not been sufficient to improve women’s relative position within the country. As explained by participants in this study, as well as in previous research outside of Turkey, women’s participation in decision-making mechanisms is crucial, not only for improving economic policies and occupational courses, but also to ensure the buy-in of these programs by all actors at the local level. However, as one participant noted, future studies must continue to examine the influence of patriarchy, particularly on limiting the scope of support local, female politicians are able to provide to occupational courses and programs. Furthermore, as researchers continue to critically assess the efficacy of these courses, it will be important to examine how discrimination based on factors such as class, religion, ethnicity delineate distinct borders, resulting in different, unequal experiences of economic opportunity for different women and men.

Participants offered a number of recommendations, based on their experiences, for

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112 In the most recent election, women held 17.8 per cent of the 550 seats in Parliament, which is a significant increase over recent years. See, “Elections Herald an Increase in Women MPs in Turkey, but More Progress is Needed,” http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/6/elections-herald-increase-in-women-mps-in-turkey-but-more-progress-is-needed

improving the efficacy of job-skills and occupational courses for women. These recommendations extended to the nature of course methodology, the length of courses, as well as the provision of childcare centers. In particular, the participant’s arguments on the effects of care labor, not only on women’s participation in the labor force but also on their ability to participate in vocational courses, demonstrate why researchers must take more seriously the multiple ways in which domestic and care labor have been overlooked and unrewarded in global, neoliberal economic policies to the detriment of women. The responses of participants in this study reiterate the reality that women struggle to achieve economic opportunity and equality while “individuals and institutions are free riding off of the benefits that women in care labor provide.”

As Turkish economists and participants in this study have noted, the invisibility of domestic and care labor not only affects women’s participation in the labor force and training courses but also, consequently, leaves a disproportionate amount of women without security or benefits within the current Turkish welfare model. Future studies must continue to recognize how the marginalization of domestic and care labor in economic and social policies disproportionately affects women’s economic opportunities as well as the accessibility of vocational courses.

Finally, as one participant noted, “education does not happen in a vacuum,” and without a more critical examination of the neopatriarchal tendencies of economic, political and social spheres; education programs, such as vocational and occupational courses, will do little to change women’s status. By relying on education as a retrofit, or a quick-fix attempt to account for the women’s low labor force participation without accounting for other systemic inequalities, such programs may do more harm than good in the long-term. By highlighting the hope, followed by disappointment

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experienced by those participating in these courses, women in this study cautioned against the continued promotion of courses in their current design. The evaluation report on IŞKUR trainings revealed that there was a significant difference between the expectations participants had of the courses and the actual impacts of IŞKUR training on their employment. The report explained away these findings by highlighting the common tendency to overestimate the benefits of a training course. Yet, the women in this study explained that women were regularly attending these trainings, acquiring a number of certificates and remaining unemployed. I end this chapter with the response of one participant, who argued that while education and training are currently highly valued in Turkey, they are losing their value through the ineffectual coordination of job-skills and occupational courses. She succinctly explains why future policies must take more seriously the promotion of these programs absent the guarantee, or even possibility of employment for women:

If you get an education or if you take a course, this is considered very valuable in Turkey. Culturally, education is really valued in Turkey. Let’s educate, let’s educate. You can educate people, but normally, if they can’t find a job, after a while, there is no meaning to this education. People are slowly starting to give up on the value of education. The same thing exists for these types of programs. You teach a woman and then after she can’t find employment. So you’ve trained her to work, you’ve motivated her towards employment, you might as well give her something. Let there be an employment guarantee to these programs. But instead the mentality is, take this course, do whatever you want. The reality is that this is the type of ridiculousness that is part of these programs. They are a nice idea but actually there’s a big risk associated with these types of projects. They’re disconnected. Broken. And all of these projects are becoming more like this. If you go to a woman with these types of projects, you are giving her hope. Look, you say, if you learn this, after that you will be successful. So she learns but nothing happens. The next time another, similar project is being done, she’s not interested. The success of these projects is very, very important. If these projects fail, all of the following projects will not be supported.115

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115 Interview, January 22, 2015, translated by author.
Chapter Six:

“Swimming Against the Current”
Experiences and Reflections on Implementing Gender-based Violence Interventions in Turkey

Gender-based violence has been identified as one of the most pervasive issues challenging the movement for gender equality in Turkey. According to a 2014 report published by the Turkish Ministry of Family and Social Policies, 36 per cent of women surveyed had been subjected to violence during their lifetime, with the highest prevalence reported in Central Anatolia (43 per cent) and the lowest in the Black Sea Region (27 per cent). The results of the study were consistent with earlier reports, which suggested that 39 per cent of women in Turkey are likely to experience some form of physical violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime.

Since the late 1980s, significant steps have been taken to both raise awareness and introduce legal mechanisms to eradicate gender-based violence in Turkey. These successes were due, in large part, to women’s movements that campaigned against gender-based violence because they saw it as a violation of women’s human rights and an obstacle to gender equality. Despite the important progress that has been made over the past three decades, challenges persist in the movement to combat gender-based violence in Turkey, particularly in the implementation of legal reforms and support mechanisms. Some have argued that the poor implementation of gender initiatives in

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1 Interview, July 14, 2014, translated by author.
Turkey demonstrates a “superficial” political commitment to the eradication of gender-based violence that, in many ways, reproduces gender inequality through a growing political conservatism which prioritizes the unity of the family over the protection of women’s individual rights.\(^6\)

Research related to the efficacy of gender initiatives, including interventions to prevent and combat gender violence, frequently cites the important, but understudied difference between the adoption of gender policies and their subsequent implementation.\(^7\) While the adoption of international conventions for gender equality, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), is identifiable, the implementation of legal and support mechanisms is often inconsistent and their outcomes are largely unknown.\(^8\) Our limited understanding of the challenges associated with implementing gender initiatives can, in many ways, be explained by the reliance on state-centric models for analyzing human rights.\(^9\) This dependence not only masks the contributions of non-state actors, such as women’s organizations, in the recognition of human rights, but also fails to adequately capture the complex interactions involved in the interpretation and implementation of gender initiatives in local contexts.\(^10\)

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\(^8\) Moser and Moser, “Gender Mainstreaming Since Beijing,” 11.


Building off of Zehra F. Kabasakal Arat’s (2006) framework of analysis for non-state actors and human rights,\textsuperscript{11} in this chapter, I explore the challenges women in civil society organizations (CSOs) experience in implementing interventions to prevent and eradicate gender-based violence. Informed by the responses of program coordinators located in 24 women-led civil society organizations throughout Turkey, I argue that the process of implementation is both complex and contested, reflecting some of the most pressing and underexamined challenges of the global campaign for gender equality and the eradication of gender-based violence. These challenges can be better understood by an approach that emphasizes the interactions that occur between state and non-state actors.

While each of the CSOs I visited managed multiple gender initiatives, every participant explained that combatting gender-based violence, in its myriad manifestations, was indispensable to any other initiative for women’s empowerment and gender equality in Turkey. Reflecting on the founding of her organization in the early 1990s, one woman captured the sentiment of participants in this study well: “In Turkey, when you are doing something about women, whatever you named it, whatever your aim is, first you have to deal with violence against women.”\textsuperscript{12} The responses of participants in this study suggest that by focusing on the adoption of policies at the national level while disregarding the interactions which take place during implementation, state-centric paradigms for analyzing human rights not only obscure the ways in which women are ultimately tasked with the responsibility of preventing and combating gender-based violence, but also deflect attention away from the structural and institutional conditions that both reproduce gender inequality and contribute to the manifestation of gender-based violence.

\textsuperscript{11} Arat, “Looking Beyond the State but Not Ignoring It,” 4.
\textsuperscript{12} Interview, March 17, 2015, translated by author.
This chapter is divided into four sections. First, I provide a brief overview of Arat’s model for “looking beyond the state but not ignoring it”\(^\text{13}\) when examining human rights initiatives. Second, I highlight how the activism of women’s movements, both internationally and in Turkey, was instrumental to the recognition of gender-based violence as both a violation of women’s human rights and an obstacle to gender equality. Third, supported by the responses of women who participated in this project, I explore their reflections on the Turkish government’s response to gender violence. Finally, I highlight the challenges these women have experienced in implementing initiatives to eradicate gender-based violence, including programs geared toward both men and women.

“Looking Beyond” State-Centric Models for Analyzing Human Rights:

Arat (2006) argues that one of the main challenges to the enjoyment of human rights has been the creation of “a human rights regime that is statist.”\(^\text{14}\) States serve as parties to international conventions and treaties. Consequently, the language of international human rights declarations and treaties ultimately assigns states the dual responsibility of refraining from individual human rights violations, while they are “simultaneously ‘charged with’ the steps necessary to ‘ensure’ or even ‘guarantee’ rights are enjoyed without discrimination by its people.”\(^\text{15}\) State-centric approaches have been effective in the establishment of a normative framework for identifying the emergence of human rights as a global concern. However, such approaches have failed to engender the political environment or protective mechanisms to ensure the enjoyment of these rights. As a result, state-

\(^{13}\) Arat, “Looking Beyond the State but Not Ignoring It,” 4.

\(^{14}\) Ibid., 4-6.

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 4.
centric models can result in the “selective treatment of human rights,” where violations that occur in the public domain are prioritized and violations occurring in private domains are ignored.\textsuperscript{16}

Arat suggests a framework which does not ignore, but looks “beyond the state” to the role of non-state actors within the human rights framework.\textsuperscript{17} Such a framework not only provides a more accurate analysis of the role of non-state actors in both “violating and protecting human rights,” but also allows for an examination of the effects of interactions between all involved actors.\textsuperscript{18} The interactions between these actors are important. Just as international organizations can exert pressure on states to comply with human rights conventions, civil society, corporate and transnational actors can also pressure states to adhere to international obligations. Yet, the \textit{pattern of activities} performed by these non-state actors is absent from state-centered approaches.

Arat’s alternative model for examining non-state actors in the human rights framework is an important starting point for understanding the important role of women’s organizations in the recognition of violence as a violation of human rights and an obstacle to gender equality. Because women’s concerns and issues of gender equality have historically been excluded from the centers of state power, civil society organizations have often been the site of women’s activism.\textsuperscript{19} These organizations have played a critical role in interacting with state and international organizations, “spreading norms and changes in intergovernmental and governmental discourse,”\textsuperscript{20} by not only

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{16} Arat, “Looking Beyond the State but Not Ignoring It,” 5-6.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid., 6-10.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 6.
\end{itemize}
creating “an alternative space”\textsuperscript{21} within the structure of global human rights, but also by pressuring actors to improve gender mainstreaming activities within state institutions.\textsuperscript{22}

By shifting the focus to non-state actors, it is possible to recognize, both internationally and in Turkey, women’s activism as a pattern of activities and interactions that were integral to the recognition of gender-based violence as a violation of women’s human rights and an obstacle to gender equality. The identification of gender-based violence as a worldwide concern and as an issue necessitating a global policy response was largely the result of efforts by transnational women’s movements. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent increased focus on human rights and democratization by the United Nations provided an important window of opportunity for gender issues to be incorporated into UN Conference agendas. While CEDAW has been considered an important international bill of rights for women, in that it both defined and outlined steps to eliminate discrimination against women, it did not specifically address gender-based violence. As a result, many countries did not acknowledge or address the issue of gender-based violence until the 1990s.

The adoption of General Recommendation 19 by the CEDAW committee in 1992 was an important step, because violence became connected to the larger framework of discrimination against women, thus requiring states to both report on and take active measures to eradicate gender-based violence. In 1993, the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna had a profound impact on the recognition of gender violence as a human rights violation that necessitated


immediate, international action. Within six months of the Vienna Conference, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. The declaration explicitly defined violence against women as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”

Following the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1996) identified violence against women as one of the 12 critical areas of concern which necessitated “urgent action” to achieve the goal of gender equality.

Since 1995, the political bodies of the United Nations have continually adopted and amended resolutions to ensure the recognition of gender-based violence as an obstacle to the achievement of development, equality and peace. In the year 2000, the Beijing Plus Five Conference reaffirmed the objectives in the Platform of Action regarding violence against women and expanded on the document to call for the criminalization of violence against women as an act punishable by law. In the same year, the UN Security Council adopted Security Council Resolution 1325 to address the issue of women, security and peace. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court now recognizes rape, sexual, slavery, enforced prostitution, forced prostitution as crimes against humanity and war crimes. More recently, in 2014, the Council of Europe ratified the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (known as the Istanbul Convention), to provide a set of comprehensive standards to prevent and combat gender violence.

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24 For an excellent review of both international women’s movements as well as those in Turkey on the issue of gender violence, see Kardam, “Turkey’s Engagement with Global Women’s Human Rights,” 108-135. In Turkish, see S. Nazik İşik, “1990’larda kadına yönelik aile içi şiddetle mücadele hareketi içinde oluşan bazı gözlem ve düşünceler, in 90’lardan Türkiye’de Feminizmin, edited by A. Bora and A. Günel (İstanbul: İletişim, 2002), 41-72.
Women’s transnational activism was instrumental to the recognition of gender-based violence as a violation of women’s human rights and the adoption of international conventions, treaties and resolutions to prevent and combat it. The participation within this movement of women’s organizations in Turkey as well as the pressure these groups exercised on the Turkish state to make the reforms necessary to eradicate gender violence has been termed a “local manifestation of a global movement.” It is important to note that due to the activism of women’s movements in Turkey, a number of significant advances were made to address the issue of gender violence that preceded the adoption of international conventions and platforms.

Since the late 1980s, significant steps have been taken to raise awareness on the topic of gender-based violence and to introduce legal mechanisms aiming to prevent violence against women. For example, it was reported that in the city of Çankırı, when he dismissed the case of a pregnant woman subjected to violence by her husband, a judge referenced the folk saying, “No woman should be without a child in her womb and a stick on her back.” The “Campaign Against Battering” became the first systematic action by women against domestic violence and the first mass demonstration took place on Mother’s Day, May 17, 1987. In 1989, a rape case was brought before the Supreme Court challenging Article 438 of the Turkish Penal Code, which reduced penalties given to rapists by one-third if the victim was a sex-worker. The court ruled that Article 438 was not in violation of the Equality Clause of the Constitution (Article 10) because it aimed to protect ‘respectable women.’ The subsequent public reaction and protests by women’s groups to the Supreme Court’s decision ultimately resulted in the abrogation of Article 438 by the Grand National Assembly in 1990.

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25 S. Nazik İşlik, “1990’larda kadına yönelik aile içi şiddetle mücadeleye hareketi içinde oluşmuş bazı gözlem ve düşünceler.”
During the 1980s and the 1990s, activities coordinated by women’s movements such as public demonstrations, media reports, publications and lobbying became part of the campaign against violence and were integral to creating public awareness and pressuring governments to respond to domestic violence. Over the past three decades, women’s movements and their activism have been instrumental to a number of changes in the Turkish Penal Code\(^\text{27}\) on issues such as rape, sexual assault, virginity tests, honor killings and domestic violence and have been vocal on criticisms of their implementation.\(^\text{28}\) In 1998, as a response to extensive lobbying from the women’s movement, the Law on the Protection of the Family, Law No. 4320 was enacted by the Turkish Parliament and was amended in 2007.\(^\text{29}\) On March 8, 2012, in honor of International Women’s Day, the Turkish Parliament passed the Law on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women. The law was a more advanced version of Law No. 4320, in that it provided a more specific definition of violence and called for the implementation of more support mechanisms for victims of gender violence.\(^\text{30}\)


\(^{29}\) Specifically, Law No. 4320 allowed any family member that is a victim of domestic violence to apply to the court and receive a restraining order from the judge against the perpetrator of that violence. Perpetrators who did not comply with the restraining order would be given a prison sentence of three to six months. Women’s rights activists argued that there were a number of limitations to this law. In particular, the law did not consider forms of violence such as psychological, social, sexual or economic. Furthermore, it failed to provide protection to individuals who were not officially married or who were divorced. See Kayar, Habibe Yilmaz. “Kadına Yönelik Siddet, 4320 Sayılı Ailenin Korunmasına Dair Kanun Yönetmelik Yargıtay Kararları ve Uygulama Sorunları.”

\(^{30}\) Women’s organizations have also provided criticisms of Law No. 6284. In particular, they highlight that the law does not explicitly define violence against women as a violation of human rights. Additionally, many have argued that the law lacks an institutional foundation for implementing support mechanisms and that while the law was being implemented, the staff for Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers was being reduced. See “8 Mart’a ‘Tartısmali’ Hediye.” 9 Mar. 2012. Web. 29 July 2012. http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalEklerDetayV3&ArticleID=1081179&CategoryID=77.
ratify the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, indicating a commitment to eradicating gender-based violence.

Recognizing the history of women’s activism provides a broader and more nuanced account of the multiple actors involved in the development of protective measures to prevent and combat gender-based violence. The interactions between these multiple actors are important, but are often missing in literature that emphasizes the state as the actor and individuals as victims. By recounting the activism of women’s movements, it is possible to see the ways in which state-centric approaches not only render women’s contributions invisible, but also fail to recognize that power has both constraining and enabling effects and has been used as an “aspect of agency” by women activists in challenging state and international actors.31

In the remaining sections of this paper, I extend this argument by focusing on women’s interactions between women-led CSOs and the Turkish state in the implementation of interventions to eradicate gender-based violence. Their responses suggest that there is a need to more critically address the process of implementing protective measures for women’s human rights. In particular, the responses of participants indicate that focusing on the state not only obscures the ways in which women are tasked with the responsibility of implementing gender initiatives, but also deflects attention away from the structural and institutional conditions that both reproduce gender inequality and contribute to the manifestation of gender-based violence.

Women’s Reflections on the State’s Response to Gender-Based Violence in Turkey:

The challenges and limitations of state responses to gender-based violence have been well documented. These limitations may extend to the implementation of initiatives that meet international obligations but fail to address root causes, the belief that gender violence programs and services are a “western” import, judicial passivity and poor implementation of punitive and preventative measures. Because “women are the most likely candidates for their own advancement,” civil society organizations have been identified as one of the few spaces where initiatives that seek to transform gendered social relations could occur. The rise of non-state actors, particularly non-governmental organizations (NGOs), in the promotion of women’s human rights has recently received greater attention in the academic literature. NGOs and CSOs have often served as “subaltern counterpublics… that are parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counterdiscourses.”

Research has begun to recognize the role of CSOs in the promotion of women’s human rights and in pressuring transnational and state actors to improve gendered social relations. However, less attention is given to the challenges women experience in interacting with state institutions. Ecevit (2007) argues that while critical of the state, women’s organizations in Turkey

36 Kardam, Turkey’s Engagement with Global Women’s Human Rights.
37 DeJaeghere, et al “Gender Justice and Education,” 539-545.
have engaged in “uneasy collaboration” with state organizations to achieve certain goals.\textsuperscript{40} This collaboration between the state and women’s organizations has been considered crucial to expanding gender accountability in Turkey, particularly during the 1990s. However, Acar and Altunok (2013) argue that since 2007, patriarchal values have become more dominant and have increasingly become manifest in the policies of the government of the Justice and Development Party (AKP).\textsuperscript{41}

Participants in this study stressed that a growing political conservatism within the government was erasing the progress made by women’s movements. Many participants in this project emphasized that the current state’s anemic response to gender violence in Turkey was not only the impetus for developing their programs but also a key reason why women-led civil society organizations were one of the few viable alternatives for providing women with the means to combat gender-based violence in their own lives. One woman, who worked as a coordinator in the urban center of Ankara, shared her reflections on the politics of providing services to women who have experienced gender-based violence:

As an organization, we originally began as a shelter and solidarity center to give support to women in the area to meet their general needs. The solidarity center provided free legal support and psychological support. At the same time, things are done to provide shelter. Where do you need to apply for economic assistance? What do you need to do to continue living? We try to provide information on these topics. We try to provide program on violence against women as well as women’s solidarity. But following the election, the project was cancelled and when the project was cancelled there was no shelter and women who had suffered violence had nowhere to go. We didn’t have the shelter, but we continued with the solidarity center.\textsuperscript{42}


\textsuperscript{42} Interview, December 2, 2014, translated by author.
She also continued to explain the reason the project was cancelled:

[The project’s cancellation] was somewhat political. It goes to how women are seen at the societal level. Women should not separate from the family. For example, in Ankara, there are only six women’s shelters. There’s one in Keçiören, Çankaya, Mamak, at the Ministry of Family and Social Policies there are two and Yenimahalle was going to open one but it hasn’t opened yet. But when you look at the population of Ankara and the law, every neighborhood should open a shelter. Despite the fact that it is required by law, they haven’t opened. But when you have a President that makes statements like “men and women’s equality is against nature” then you understand how neighborhoods under his control and under this perspective cancel projects and do not open women’s shelters. Then, when we sent women to the police, they counsel them by saying, “This is your family. Your husband beats you and loves you. Go, look after your children. Do not break up your family.” After that, where will these women apply? Where will they go? They are counseling these women to go back.

Her comments are consistent with earlier reports of women having difficulty accessing legal and institutional mechanisms for support. Specifically, research indicates that violence is often condoned by the police, who send women back to their abusive husbands to resolve the “private” problem within the family, and that consequently, women have reported a lack of trust in police and security forces, particularly in the southeastern region of Turkey. This may also explain why, in a study conducted of 599 women in the southeast region of Turkey, although 57 per cent of participants had experienced physical violence, only 1.2 per cent notified the police and only .2 per

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43 Here, the participant is referencing speeches made by current Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at Women and Justice Summit and after where he voiced his objection to the equality of women and men and instead referred to their “equivalency.” See http://www.hurriyetedailynews.com/turkish-president-erdogan-says-womens-equality-with-men-against-nature.aspx?pageID=238&nID=74726&NewsCatID=338.

44 Interview, December 2, 2014. The neighborhoods referenced in this passage are in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey.


cent filed a complaint.48 Many women have reported a lack of trust that police and security forces will either take action against perpetrators of gender-based violence or provide adequate assistance.49 However, as a study conducted by Bilgi University (2003) reported, 91 percent of women surveyed said they would like to find shelter within a social foundation.50 The preference for social foundations and, in particular, women’s organizations has also been reported elsewhere.51 At the same time, these studies suggest that although women’s organization would like to have shelters, they would prefer that those shelters remain independent of the government.52 Many of the participants in this study also raised this point and suggested that a growing conservatism in the government may be the reason women’s organizations prefer to operate independently. As another program coordinator, who also worked in Ankara, explained:

Over the past few years, the cases of gender violence that we have dealt with have increased in the Ministry of Family and Social Policies- which used to be the Ministry for Women and Family - I think this change reflects a growing conservatism. Now, their programs focus on defining women’s roles in the family, exalting motherhood and anger management. What has been organized by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies is more conservative, they have been successful in creating education programs that have actually reproduced gender roles. So, nowadays, if someone asks whether there are programs being done that are based on women, you would feel compelled to say yes. But from the perspective of women’s empowerment, these are bad examples. For that reason, I think it is important to point out the necessity of women’s organizations, especially their work on women as individuals as well as tools they can use to control violence in their lives.53

The increasing difficulty of working with the Ministry of Family and Social Policies was raised by a number of participants. Originally, when the National Women’s Ministry was established

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53 Interview March 11, 2015, translated by author.
in 1990, it was comprised of two separate organizations: the Directorate for Women’s Status and Problems and the Family Research Organization.\textsuperscript{54} However, since 1990, the location of the National Women’s Ministry has been moved from the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare to the Ministry of State Responsible for Women’s Affairs, Family and Social Services. While efforts were made in 1993 and 1994 to strengthen the National Women’s Ministry by giving it permanent legal status, this status was not achieved until 2004 when an organizational law was passed as part of the AKP’s commitment to the Copenhagen Criteria and EU harmonization process.\textsuperscript{55}

The creation of the National Women’s Ministry was originally seen by Turkey as an important step in taking the necessary steps to promote gender equality within the country. However, Ertürk (2006) reports that although the Ministry enjoys legitimate legal status, the organization had become increasingly detached from women.\textsuperscript{56} On June 8, 2011, the Directorate for Women’s Status and Problems was restructured to be absorbed under the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, omitting the term “women” from its name.\textsuperscript{57} Women’s organizations saw the move as political, since it mirrored the place of women within the family structure. As Nazan Moroğlu, coordinator for the Istanbul Women’s Associations said of the move, “Gender equality is the main criterion for democracy in any country. The closure of the State Ministry for Women and Family

\begin{footnotes}
\item[55] Kardam, “Assessment of National Women’s Machineries in Turkey.”
\item[56] Yakın Ertürk, “Turkey’s Modern Paradoxes: Identity Politics, Women’s Agency and Universal Rights,” in Miyra Marx Ferree and Aili Tripp (eds), \textit{Global Feminism: Transnational Women’s Activism, Organizing and Human Rights} (University of Wisconsin Press, 2006).
\end{footnotes}
Affairs and its replacement with a Ministry of Family and Social Policies are steps back regarding the goal of gender equality.”

The restructuring of the Ministry for Women and Family Affairs was highlighted by a number of participants as symbolic of the growing conservatism of the government as well as a decreased emphasis on gender equality and women’s rights. One program coordinator for a women’s organization in Istanbul, underscored the implications of the changes within the Ministry, both for women’s movements in Turkey and for groups seeking to provide services to women:

The new group is so conservative… they are erasing the important history of National Women’s Machinery as an institution. At the same time, it’s also been hard as a group looking to improve women’s conditions to continually adapt to all of the changes that are made at the governmental level.

These changes coincide with the criticisms that the ŞÖNİM, or the Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers established by the Ministry of Family and Social Policies, protect the integrity of the family at the expense of keeping women and children away from violence. Furthermore, others have argued that the government “undemocratically” selected three non-governmental organizations to serve on the independent body of experts that will monitor the country’s implementation of the Istanbul Convention, also known as the Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and

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59 Interview August 14, 2014, translated by author.

Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.\textsuperscript{61} These recent changes were all cited by coordinators as both limitations of a state approach to gender violence and why women-led civil society organizations were so crucial. As one coordinator suggested, “If there is no contact for women who have experienced violence or no place for them to go, there will never be an understanding of what to do.”\textsuperscript{62}

Many of the participants in this study indicated that the state’s response to gender-based violence was not only superficial, but also served to dispossess women of the mechanisms necessary to combat violence in their lives. Their comments are consistent with previous research that indicates that although the state has been a powerful actor in the promotion of women’s rights, its position towards women has often been self-contradictory, creating new opportunities for women in the public sphere while simultaneously supporting traditional, patriarchal family roles within the private sphere.\textsuperscript{63} As Ecevit (2007) explains, the state has historically employed vacillating strategies in its relationship with women’s movements in Turkey, whereby “co-optation is pursued if women’s demands were relevant to the regime’s goals, but repression was employed if the organization was seen as a threat to the regime.”\textsuperscript{64} The superficial support of women’s empowerment as well as the erasure of viable institutional and support mechanisms illustrates the chasm between the rhetoric and the reality of eradicating the social structures that reproduce gender violence in Turkey.

\textsuperscript{61} Women for Women’s Human Rights, “Turkey’s Undemocratic GREVIO Candidacy Process,” published December 29, 2014 accessed January 1, 2015 at http://www.wwhr.org/turkeys-undemocratic-grevio-candidacy-process/ . It is important to note that as a response to this criticism, Professor Feride Acar was later selected to represent Turkey on the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO). See “Prof. Feride Acar GREVIO’nun başkanı oldu,” http://www.cnnturk.com/dunya/prof-feride-acar-grevio-nun-baskani-oldu

\textsuperscript{62} Interview March 11, 2015, translated by author.

\textsuperscript{63} Ecevit, “Women’s Rights, Women’s Organizations, and the State,” 187.

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid., 187.
While participants in this study underscored that women-led civil society organizations were necessary alternative sites for collective action against “symbolic but weak responses by the state”\(^{65}\) to gender-based violence in Turkey, they were also forthcoming about the limitations of their own, as well as other women-led programs to prevent and combat gender violence. Because gender-based violence has been conceptualized as an obstacle to women’s empowerment and gender equality, in Turkey, as in many other countries,\(^{66}\) educational interventions have been invoked as preventative mechanisms for eradicating gender-based violence.\(^{67}\) For example, regarding the status of women’s human rights in Turkey, the \textit{NGO Report on the Implementation of CEDAW in Turkey} highlighted that “the main obstacle in the way of women’s human rights is the lack of women’s awareness of what their rights are and the absence of effective means for their enforcement. A meaningful implementation of CEDAW in Turkey requires widespread, concrete action-programs to support and empower women in dealing with the discrimination they face in their daily lives.”\(^{68}\)

Education has been conceptualized as a critical mechanism for the promotion of women’s human rights and gender equality, as well as an instrument of power that allows individuals to collectively critique, mobilize and fight back against the oppression they face.\(^{6970}\) Yet, participants suggested that these programs were limited by their structure and implementation, the constraints of


\(^{69}\) Stromquist, “Gender Structure and Women’s Agency,” 60.

international funding agencies and the tendency to uncritically transfer concepts related to empowerment that ignored the ways in which gender and violence impact women differently in social and political contexts. Most of the women interviewed had previous experience with education and training initiatives for women’s empowerment and combating gender-based violence that had been funded or influenced by international agencies, state initiatives and academic feminists located in the metropolitan centers of Ankara and Istanbul. For some, the structure of these programs and the decision to call the projects “consciousness-raising” or “awareness” initiatives was informed by their experiences with previous educational interventions. In discussing her own experiences over 25 years, one woman summarized the differentiation between these two types of programs and its implications for understanding gender violence:

We don’t call our programs ‘education’ because we believe there is a hierarchy to education. There is only one educator, the others are learners. But this is not a school. You experience violence, you notice violence, you struggle against violence. When you struggle, you learn the method. Yes, in the past, I learned the theories from books a bit, but in reality, I learned from life. I learned from women. We are all learning together. I try to understand the different types of violence they experienced. When they are talking, I learn just how many types of violence exist. I didn’t sit in front of a computer- I heard from women, I listened to them. I collected my experiences by writing. In my opinion and in my experience, you have to avoid creating a hierarchy when using methods related to violence prevention and women’s empowerment. For those reasons, we call these awareness-raising programs.  

Her comments echoed other participants’ experiences with educational initiatives for women’s empowerment and combating gender-based violence. The literature on adult education as a project of intervention and social change often stresses the need for horizontal relationships where participants are empowered to confront oppression through dialogue and social action. However, women participating in this project argued that power, hierarchy and social control were

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71 Interview March 14, 2015, translated by author.
deeply embedded in the educational initiatives they had participated in. Women in this study argued that despite the popularity of educational initiatives as interventions to eradicate gender-based violence, the very structure of education, where power ultimately rests in the hands of one educator, was antithetical to “the method” of combating and preventing gender violence because such a hierarchy precluded the possibility of understanding the diverse and multilayered experiences of gender violence. Reclaiming the pedagogical project required a new language that was distinct, separate and removed from the implications of education.

The belief that education is hierarchal and that it distanced women from the complex and multilayered experiences of gender-based violence was supported by yet another participant, a woman who had worked on literacy programs in the urban center of Istanbul for over 20 years. She explained that the disadvantages of educational initiatives were widespread:

There is currently a problem for all programs geared towards women but it has been going on for years. Preventing violence against women is one example. It has to do with environmental factors. You are placed in a situation where you try to reduce these factors as much as possible. But changing these is difficult in a volunteer program or in a course. From the perspective of women’s empowerment, we say ‘Let’s all support the idea that women must be empowered.’ But then you give an education and you stand back. It’s difficult to see what these changes do, how they experience this change or what changes, if any, this has created in a woman’s life. This is certainly a limitation to these programs, but generally the programs are done this way.\(^74\)

For this woman and others, there was a distinct difference between supporting the idea that women must be empowered and whether or not education served as a mechanism for that empowerment. Many of these initiatives tended to be short-term seminars that focused on women’s rights and the provision of legal resources. The short duration of these programs as well as the limited interaction between participants and program facilitators made it difficult to identify the

\(^{74}\) Interview, October 27, 2014, translated by author.
impact, if any, these programs had on women’s empowerment. Yet, as the participant noted, many of the education, training and literacy programs were structured in this manner.

Furthermore, her comments also highlight the limitations of non-formal educational interventions, often considered “empowering” in contradistinction to their disempowering methods. While the concept of empowerment is complex and contested, the role of knowledge and education in women’s empowerment has been identified as crucial to theories of gender, empowerment and social change. Underlying the argument for knowledge empowerment is the assumption, supported by evidence, that education both influences women’s cognitive ability and capacity to reflect on and critically question conditions of subordination and also often provides the information and resources to act on those conditions to exert control in their lives.

Yet, Naila Kabeer (2005) stresses a “need for caution” when taking for granted the effects of education on empowerment, as they are “likely to be conditioned by the context within which it is provided and the social relationships it embodies and promotes.” For this particular participant, the context of educational initiatives that sought to empower women was largely constrained by time, financial resources and the interests of national and international donors who often influenced or shaped the curricula of the programs. Taken together, she explained that the widespread need to provide programs made it difficult for her, or her team, to critically reflect on the effectiveness of these programs. At the same time, she felt that as a result of the structure of the programs and the interests of “western” donor agencies, she felt removed from the process of facilitating actual change in women’s lives.

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Naila Kabeer’s (1999) reflections on the measurements of empowerment are useful in understanding the limitations of such an approach here. She argues that empowerment entails both an *ability to make choices* and a *process of change*, and as such, is the “expansion in people’s ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them.”

The participant’s discussion of the constraints facing her educational programs resonate with previous research in Turkey that suggests that donor dependence often limits the ability for coherent and self-driven gender equality strategies. Instead, as Kümbetoğlu (2002) argues, western donors engage in a practice of first identifying women as being in a position of need and then providing funding to shape *what should be done for them*. Consequently, in programs such as the one the participant described, “education for empowerment” becomes a nebulous discourse of “western” donors, that is not only detached from the realities and experiences of women’s everyday lives but through application of its discourse, effectively limits the ability for women, as facilitators or participants, to make strategic life choices within this context.

The detachment of education and empowerment initiatives from the realities of women’s experiences with gender-based violence in Turkey was widely expressed by participants. Within this structure, education emerged as something distinct and separate from an individual’s awareness of the social injustices in their environment. One woman highlights the distinction clearly:

> When people say ‘education programs,’ they generally mean learning about women’s rights…but you cannot erase the oppression with education. In society, there is a particular perspective that education changes things, but it doesn’t matter if you’re educated or uneducated. You do the things that have been taught to you. Instead, there needs to be an

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80 Belkis Kümbetoğlu, “Kadınlara İlişkin Projeler,” in Aksu Bora and Asena Günal (eds.) *90larda Türkiyede Feminizm* (Istanbul: İletişim, 2002).
awareness that the things that have been taught are things I don’t deserve...I didn’t deserve them.  

Her comments highlight the important, but often underexamined difference between awareness and education. While extensive research has underscored that raising awareness on its own is insufficient to bring about social change in preventing gender violence, researchers must begin to think much more critically about the semantic differences between education and awareness. When examining the prevalence of and proclivity to gender violence, research, both internationally and in Turkey, frequently cites women’s level of educational attainment as an important indicator of gender-based violence, where higher educational levels are associated with lower levels of violence. Strategies for preventing and combating gender violence frequently cite the attainment of formal education as an important source of social and economic empowerment for women and as a necessary strategy for reducing the prevalence of violence in Turkey. Yet, as the participant suggested, the relationship between educational attainment and gender violence is far more complex. As Altınay and Arat (2009) argue in their study of violence against women in Turkey, the higher a woman’s educational level and socioeconomic status, the more difficult it may be for an individual to admit to experiencing gender violence. The challenges of working to create awareness against the stigma that education somehow prevents gender violence is well-articulated by one participant:

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81 Interview December 2, 2014, translated by author.
We try to put together diverse groups of educated, uneducated, rich, poor, Turkish,
Kurdish and Armenian individuals. But discrimination exists, even within the groups. We have often seen that the educated and the Turkish women tend to look down on the other women. These women will say, ‘We’ve come. Let’s all learn something so that we can help these other women. Our lives are really quite good.’ This is pretty normal in our programs and we try to deal with it without upsetting anyone in the group. Sure, it’s possible that your life is really good, but we have questions: You have no bad memories from your past? Your family was really that good? We try to break down these barriers, because it’s better if they can reach this awareness. Because, in reality, these women often don’t know the nature of violence... Sometimes, you can break down these types of barriers, but sometimes if they don’t see a place for themselves, some educated women and rich women leave the groups.  

This woman continued to explain that “what has been taught” to both women and men, regardless of the level of educational attainment, is that violence is an acceptable form of social control over women and that when it occurs within the family, it is treated as a family matter rather than a social issue worthy of intervention. She notes, “in every household, violence is actually used as a type of education.”

Previous research has identified the use of violence as an justifiable form of social control that is reproduced and reflected through language, and in particular, in Turkish idioms such as “He is my husband; he can love me and beat me,” “Beating comes from heaven,” “Isn’t he a man; he can love me and beat me;” and “No woman should be without a child in her womb and a stick on her back.” Other idioms, such as “one shall not go between a husband and wife,” reinforce the idea that gender violence is a private, family concern and perhaps explains why so many women are reluctant to discuss their experiences with violence.

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85 It is important to highlight here that the participant used both the terms “Türk” and “Türkiyeli” in her response. The differences between the two generally refer to being “Turkish” (a Turkey National) and “Türkiyeli” (being from Turkey). Türkiyeli is considered a supra-identity concept that has a territorial meaning, generally used to encompass all ethnic-religious communities. The term “Türk” or “Turkish” has emerged as a divisive term, particularly for Kurds and non-Muslims living in or being born in Turkey. For a more extensive review, see Didem Türkoğlu, “Challenging the National History: Competing Discourses about a Conference” Unpublished Thesis, Central European University (Budapest: Central European University, 2006).
86 Interview March 14, 2015, translated by author.
89 Interview March 14, 2015, translated by author.
The social norms that sanction the use of gender-based violence have often become internalized by women, leading to the belief that they had “somehow deserved it.” This idea has been substantiated in a previous study by Gülçür (1999), where 43 per cent of women surveyed believed that their husbands had the “right” to beat them.\footnote{Leyla Gülçür, “A Study on Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse in Turkey,” 14.} Participants in the current study noted that the internalization of these deeply embedded social norms, further complicated by a society where women are not perceived as ‘individuals’ but are defined in terms of their collective identities as mothers and wives, made it difficult to create programs where women considered their rights as individuals and violence as an act they didn’t deserve.

Furthermore, for many participants, education, like violence, was a form of social control that not only dispossessed women of their individual identities outside of the family structure but also of their differences from other women. As I mentioned in Chapter Four, one of the chief criticisms of the women’s movement in Turkey has been the failure to examine the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, religion and class. Specifically, during the 1990s, criticisms of the Turkish women’s movement exposed the tendency of Turkish feminists to assume that the common denominator of being oppressed as a woman captured the interests of all women in Turkey.\footnote{Metin Yüksel, “The Encounter of Kurdish Women with Nationalism in Turkey” Middle Eastern Studies 42 no. 5 (2006): 777-802.} For participating education coordinators, particularly those located outside of the metropolitan areas of Ankara and Istanbul, the structure of educational initiatives for women’s empowerment and gender-based violence often masked important differences between women, reproducing experiences of domination and re-domination between groups. As one woman, who worked in the southeastern region of Turkey highlights, these practices often have regressive effects:

When I think about these projects, I think of a certain thing. For example, when educators come from outside of the area, either from Ankara or from Istanbul or somewhere else.
These women come and they say, ‘Let’s do this type of education.’ They’ll say, ‘This is my body, I can use it how I want.’ But for us- for this region- this isn’t very useful. Yes, okay, I know that my body belongs to me. But when you say that to women here, it works in an under-handed way… When women come from outside of the area, there’s a hierarchy between those giving an education program and those participating in the program. They speak like they are our teachers. But I never say that I am an educator or leader. When women do that it’s such a very bad thing. No woman can teach another woman. 92

Returning to Arat’s analysis, the participant’s responses indicate how non-state actors, through the promotion of certain discourses related to gender, also have the potential to impede on an individual’s or a group’s enjoyment of their human rights. 93 Specifically, the participant’s response forces us to think more critically about the ways in which interventions that promote a singular perspective on gender fail to “speak to” or “represent” the needs of participants. 94 Researchers and practitioners must continue to critically examine the frameworks for gender equality interventions and in what ways the state, international funding agencies and even gender experts are complicit in the constitution of educational spaces that effectively disconnect and dislocate women from the reality of their experiences with gender violence. As the above participant noted, these processes are reproduced in often abstract ways that not only mask the diverse and multilayered experiences of gender-based violence but also contribute to relations of domination and re-domination for women who are subjected to multiple forms of oppression.

Finally, in recent years, academics and policy experts have shifted their focus to consider how and in what ways, men should be included into the framework of gender equality interventions. As Chant and Gutmann (2002) argue, while gender and development programs have largely been associated with projects for women, researchers are beginning to recognize the insufficiency of a ‘women-only’ approach, noting that without a consideration of men, gender interventions “can only

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92 Interview April 30, 2015, translated by author.
In Turkey, as in many other countries, by training judges, legal counsel, police officers and other civil servants, recent policy responses have sought to include men in gender initiatives. These programs are generally developed with the dual intention of providing resources to men who work closely with victims of gender-based violence and, through gender-sensitivity training, work towards the larger goal of eliminating patriarchal structures in institutional cultures. Yet, studies including men in gender initiatives are still in their nascent stages and there is little research on men’s gendered beliefs and practices.

While I was unable to interview men who worked as trainers in this study, I was able to speak with women who had provided trainings on gender-based violence interventions and gender equality to men who were in the police force, the Turkish Armed Forces and who were religious leaders in their communities. Many of the participants highlighted the importance of incorporating men into gender-based violence initiatives in Turkey. Yet, only three participants had experience working with these types of programs. Others noted that while these programs were widely promoted, especially during the last decade, women in NGOs, CSOs or in university-based women’s studies programs ultimately bore the responsibility of making these programs a reality. With limited time and financial resources, women expressed that they felt as if they had to choose which types of programs to focus on. One coordinator, whose organization had begun to develop intervention programs geared toward men and children, reflected on the overwhelming responsibility of managing each of these types of programs:

We have a program for creating awareness with women, and outside of that we are working on programs for men and for children. We know that someone should be developing these

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98 Chant and Gutman, “Men-streaming Gender?” 280.
programs to educate men… but we are at our limit. We just don’t have the time or the resources to focus our attention away from the programs for women.\textsuperscript{99}

Her comments reflect the concern that the practice of tasking women with the responsibility of gender initiatives, even those geared toward men, ultimately contributes to feelings of being overloaded, overburdened and exhausted.\textsuperscript{100} Similar to this woman’s experience, other participants acknowledged that while interventions geared toward men were important, they had neither the staff nor the financial resources to expand their current programs beyond the initiatives they were currently managing.

Participants who had received funding to develop and implement training programs geared towards men, reflected on the emotional exhaustion they experienced conducting these programs. For example, one participant, who had over a decade of experience in the training of trainers (TOTs) with police officers, governmental officials, religious leaders and members of the Turkish Armed Forces, reflected on the challenges of being tasked with such a large project with little structural or institutional support, particularly from officials promoting the programs. Over time, these programs took a toll on both the trainers and the participants:

There are so many setbacks. And these are important, because people don’t see these setbacks. When you’re working, sometimes it can be enjoyable because you get to see some change. Of course, you probably won’t connect with everyone…perhaps in a group of 20, one fourth of the group inspires you to continue your work and the other three fourths just exhaust you. But this exhaustion…really, this is related to the political environment and political will. Over time these programs continue to change quite a bit. The heads of the programs and the directors of these programs have become more conservative. The current establishment was not happy with the focus, so now the focus has changed from women to the family and children. This can be confusing for the participants and the trainers and sometimes the people we have trained no longer want to be part of the program and they quit. As coordinators, we have become so exhausted with the turnover rates and so consumed with the changes the government has made that affects the legitimacy of our work and blocks all the progress we have made. You get so tired. It’s like swimming against the

\textsuperscript{99} Interview March 14, 2015, translated by author.
current. Maybe I’m not physically exhausted, but after 11 years, I feel emotionally burnt out.\textsuperscript{101}

As researchers continue to examine the challenges of how to include men in gender and development initiatives, it will be important to take seriously the implications of tasking women with the sole responsibility of providing these interventions. The responses of participants suggest that without the structural or institutional support of the very officials promoting these programs, such programs are likely to experience extensive, long-term challenges in their implementation.

Furthermore, for women who had participated in initiatives to train male gender trainers, age was an important factor that affected the receptiveness of participants to training modules. According to these women, while the younger men seemed more receptive to the concept of gender equality and participated more during the training sessions, the older men were more resistant and often vocalized their rejection of concepts such as ‘gender equality’ or ‘violence against women.’ One woman, who had served as a trainer for a gender-based violence prevention training program geared toward police offers in Ankara, reflected on this difference:

\begin{quote}
The lower ranking, younger officers seemed to be very interested in the program and participated more than the older, higher ranking officials. I think this was because they were learning how to deal with an issue they came fact to face with on a daily basis. But the high ranking officials weren’t as interested and I think this was because they thought the trainings were not part of their business or their job. Sometimes, we were lucky and we would get younger police officers that were very interested in the project and they were actually more influential in getting higher ranking officials to become more involved in the program.\textsuperscript{102}
\end{quote}

The influence of age, both of the trainers and participants, on the success of training programs is an important concept worth further study. Obote Joshua (2001) notes that in the context of gender training in East Africa, women trainers, despite their education or training, may be

\textsuperscript{101} Interview, July 14, 2014, translated by author.
\textsuperscript{102} Interview October 8, 2014, translated by author.
seen as having a “less legitimate” voice than the men participating in the training.\textsuperscript{103} A trainer’s legitimacy may be further diminished in situations where the male participants are older and the woman is young or unmarried. In such a case, Obote Joshua recommends that the assistance of a male elder may help trainers gain the authority and legitimacy necessary for participants to become interested in new notions about gender.\textsuperscript{104} Future studies should continue to examine the relationship between age and gender on the ultimate effectiveness of training programs geared toward men.

However, it is also worth considering alternative explanations for the interpersonal dynamics women in this study experienced during these trainings. The interactions between trainers and participants may have more to do with the perception that all human rights initiatives, not just those related to gender equality, are “externally-imposed” by foreigners or by rich members of Turkish society, who have been criticized as individuals who are hired to advertise democracy.\textsuperscript{105} Previous research suggests that there is a certain danger to promoting a pro-human rights agenda in line with international organizations, or in the name of name of European Union politics, as has often been the case in Turkey.\textsuperscript{106} Çayır (2007) argues that in the teaching of human rights education, particularly in government-sponsored training seminars, trainers employ pedagogical approaches that “remain at the cognitive level rather than being transformative”\textsuperscript{107} and have often been positioned as an external legalistic discourse that is only necessary to learn for the process of EU \textit{acquis}. Because these programs do “not require any attitudinal or behavioral changes,” although participants gain cognitive

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\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{105} “Eğitim Yoluyla Güçlenme,” 60.


\end{flushright}
knowledge of human rights, Çayır suggests that this process limits both the individual internalization, as well as the transformative potential of human rights education. The lack of individual internalization and the belief that such programs are externally-imposed may more effectively explain why younger male participants, who work closely with victims of gender-based violence, are more receptive to the trainings than older male participants. Future research should consider the understudied implications of the ways in which all human rights programs are owned and interpreted by both men and women in local contexts, in what ways resistance is explained by feelings that the programs are “externally-imposed” and the implications of these influences on the ultimate efficacy of interventions to prevent and combat gender-based violence.

**Conclusion:**

In this chapter, I explore the challenges women in CSOs experience in implementing initiatives to prevent and eradicate gender-based violence. By framing the analysis in a manner that looks beyond the state and considers non-state actors within the promotion of human rights, it’s possible to recognize the important contributions of women’s organizations to the emergence of gender-based violence as a violation of human rights and an obstacle to gender equality. Moreover, by examining women’s reflections on their interactions with multiple actors, it also becomes possible to understand the complexity and contestation involved in the implementation of initiatives to prevent and eradicate gender-based violence.

The reflections of participants in this study were consistent with previous studies regarding the role of women-led CSOs as indispensable, alternative sites for transformative gender action and
the dissemination of counter-hegemonic knowledge.\textsuperscript{108} Yet, their responses were unique and differed from previous studies through their considerable emphasis on the limitations embedded within these alternative spaces. Previous studies have tended to promote women-led CSOs for their ability to both serve as “subaltern counterpublics” and create safe spaces to produce counter-hegemonic knowledge.\textsuperscript{109} However, the majority of women interviewed here acknowledged that these spaces are still very much limited by the constraints of the state, international funding agencies and academic experts.

While the state has often been criticized in its approach to managing gender initiatives, the responses of women in this study suggest that research must also look at the ways in which non-state actors have the potential to further marginalize women through pedagogies and practices that are dislocated and disconnected from the realities of women’s experiences with gender-based violence in Turkey. In particular, the responses of women located outside of the metropolitan centers of Ankara and Istanbul suggest that further research must be done to identify the advantages as well as the disadvantages of alliances between non-state actors, such as civil society organizations and universities, on gender transformative initiatives.

Additionally, participants’ reflections demonstrate the need to more critically examine the promotion of gender ‘awareness’ programs that, in reality, are imbued with the same pedagogical methods of hierarchy, dominance and social control that have plagued educational initiatives. Feminist research has long considered awareness and consciousness-raising as integral for collective organizing and action against oppressive, patriarchal social structures.\textsuperscript{110} Yet, Nayak and Suchland


\textsuperscript{109} Fraser, “Justice Interruptus,” 81.

(2006) argue that particular gender categories have been advanced for political ends that unwittingly sustain hegemonic projects, including gender violence. The widespread endorsement of community awareness programs as a mechanism for preventing and combating gender-based violence, coupled with the criticisms by participants in this study that these programs often do not promote awareness, forces us to more closely examine the ways in which concepts, such as education are perceived to have been co-opted to sustain and control the hegemonic project of gender-based violence.

Understanding how participants perceive these projects is not only important for programs geared toward women, but for those geared toward men as well. Future studies must continue to examine the inclusion of men into gender initiatives, particularly the ways in which women are tasked with the responsibility of developing these programs as well as the dynamics that occur within these training sessions. In this way, researchers must continue to critically analyze the implications of programs that are seen as “externally imposed” by donor countries, the European Union or the United States, as these factors may ultimately influence the efficacy of interventions.

Finally, it is important for future research to consider the effects of social media movements on the recognition of women’s rights and the struggle against gender-based violence. Recently, a number of social media campaigns and street protests in Turkey have focused on the topic of women’s rights and gender violence. For example, in February of 2015, the brutal murder of Ozgecan Aslan, a 20-year-old university student sparked mass Twitter as well as street protests. Women throughout Turkey took to social media in response to the murder, as well as the rates of harassment and violence in Turkey, using hashtags such as #ozgecanaslan and #sendeanlat (tell your story). Men also became part of the social media campaign in the days following the murder, where

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photos of men marching in Istanbul while wearing skirts were circulated with the hashtag #ozgecanicinminietekgiy (wear a mini skirt for Ozgecan).\footnote{Monica Sarkar, “Men Support Women’s Rights in Turkey...by Wearing Miniskirts,” accessed January 20, 2016 http://www.cnn.com/2015/02/22/europe/turkey-men-miniskirts/} A number of social media campaigns on Twitter have followed in recent months throughout Turkey, with hashtags such as 
#kadınaşiddetehayır (no to violence against women), #sessizkalmyoruz (we will not be silent) and most recently, #canselicinsusma (do not stay quiet about Cansel), in response to the suicide of Cansel Buse K., an 18-year-old high school student who had allegedly been sexually assaulted by one of her teachers.\footnote{“Turkish Schoolgirl ‘Commits Suicide After Teacher’s Assault,’” Al Arabiya English accessed February 22, 2016 http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/2016/02/22/Turkish-schoolgirl-commits-suicide-after-teacher-s-assault-.html.} These social media campaigns have brought worldwide attention to the issue of gender-based violence and, according to activists such as Turkish lawyer Hulya Gülbahtar, reflect the first time that women’s rights have been so widely endorsed in Turkey.\footnote{Sarkar, “Men Support Women’s Rights in Turkey.”}

Moving forward, researchers and practitioners should continue to critically examine the important role social media campaigns have in creating widespread support for women’s rights and condemnation against gender-based violence. In particular, there are two considerations worth noting here for the study of social media campaigns as solidarity movements for addressing gender inequality and violence. First, social media campaigns, like other social movements, also have the potential to be inclusive and exclusive. For example, Nebahat Akkoç, a women’s right activist and founder of the Women’s Consultation and Solidarity Center (KAMER) in Diyarbakir, highlighted the difference between media coverage of Ozgecan Aslan’s murder and the attack of Mutlu Kaya, a 19-year-old singer who received death threats and was shot in the head while performing on stage in a national televised song contest. As Akkoç explained, “The Ozgecan case was more effective for raising awareness, because many families have children studying away from home. That got a lot of
attention. I didn’t hear many people talking about the Kaya case. People felt bad about it, of course, but it didn’t resonate.” Akkoç explained that an important difference between the cases was that while Mutlu Kaya was attacked by someone she knew, Ozgecan Aslan was killed by a stranger.

When examining the effects of social media campaigns, future studies must continue to explore the ways that media may reflect or perpetuate gendered norms surrounding violence against women and women’s rights, such as the distinction between violence that occurs in the private versus the public spheres. Second, as social media emerges as a new, alternative platform for protests and demonstrations, it is important to continue to consider how the state interacts with, and seeks to control, this emergent non-state actor. In recent years, the Turkish government has been criticized for shutting down access to websites such as Twitter, Youtube and Facebook in the face of protests and social media campaigns. Future studies must continue to focus on the ways in which governments may censor or block social media campaigns as a method of control and its implications for promoting women’s rights, gender equality and eradicating gender-based violence within this new dynamic.

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Chapter Seven:

Envisioning an-Other\ Education Space:
Opportunities and Challenges in Adult Education Programs for Women in Turkey

“Space is Fundamental in any Exercise of Power”

In Chapter Two, I argued that adult education spaces are a product of gendered social relations and histories of marginalizing women’s experiences. With their development that paralleled formal education institutions both before and after the establishment of the Turkish Republic, adult and non-formal education programs have played an important role in Turkey. However, as Tan (2008) argues, problems for women and girls in terms of enrollment and curricula persist in these programs. Specifically, Tan notes that while 62 per cent of women reported participating in some type of official program organized by the National Ministry of Education between the years 1999-2000, reports indicate that that percentage has fallen to 49 per cent.

Furthermore, recent studies indicate that gender bias exists in enrollment patterns in adult education programs in Turkey. In particular, traditional gender roles were reflected in the enrollment patterns for educational activities hosted by public education centers, or Halk Eğitim Merkezleri: Of the 25 different courses offered through programs of various Halk Eğitim Merkezleri, the ones most frequently enrolled in by women are weaving (97 per cent), hand crafts (94 per cent),

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3 Cevat Celap, Halk Eğitim (Ankara: Anı Yayıncılık, 2003); Adil Türkoğlu and Sanem Uça, Türkiye’de Halk Eğitim: Tarihsel Gelişimi, Sorunlar ve Çözüm Önerileri,” Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi 2, s. 2 (Aralık 2011): 48-62, for a historical overview of non-formal education activities pre-dating the Turkish Republic, including the Medrese, the Ahilik, the Lonca and the Ordu; Mehmet Bilir (2013) highlights the development of associations and civil society organizations which focused on educational activities including the Osmanlı Bilim Derneği (1860); the İslam Öğretim Derneği (1864); the Besikaş Bilim Derneği (1869); the İтиhat Terakki Fırkası (1910) and others including the Türk Ocağı Derneği (1911), see Mehmet Bilir, “Yetişkin Eğitiminin Tarihsel Gelişimi,” in Yetişkin Eğitim der. Ahmet Yıldız ve Meral Uysal (İstanbul: Kalkedon Yayınları, 2013), 42-46.
5 Ibid.
knitting (94 per cent), while the lowest enrollments are seen in livestock (1.3 per cent), furnishings (0.2 per cent), electronics (1.0 per cent) and construction (2.75 per cent). These trends and other concerns have led many researchers to suggest that the tools provided in these non-formal education programs have actually served to reinforce traditional stereotypes of gender roles in Turkey.\(^6\)

As a result of the marginalization and discrimination women experienced in formal and state-run universities, women-led civil society organizations have begun to receive greater attention in national and international reports, earning the designation of alternative spaces that serve to counter the lack of awareness regarding women’s rights in Turkey.\(^7\) Since “women are the most likely advocates for their own advancement,”\(^8\) researchers and activists have begun to highlight women-led civil society organizations as one of the few spaces where adult education that seeks to transform gendered social relations could occur.\(^9\) By creating “an alternative space”\(^10\) to the current structure of educational activities, research indicates that these organizations can be important sites of gender-transformative education initiatives. These spaces can encourage identity formation and allow individuals to mobilize and collectively pressure trans-national and state actors to improve gendered social relations and improve women’s conditions.\(^11\)

Emerging literature indicates that there is great potential for the development of adult

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\(^6\) Mine Göğüş Tan, “Eğitim,” 83-84.


\(^9\) Ibid.


education programs in women-led civil society organizations. However, scant attention is given to the experiences of women operating within these “alternative” and “subaltern” spaces. While the contributions of women-led civil society organizations and feminist research in challenging the marginalization of women’s education have made significant strides in challenging the marginalization of women’s education\(^{12}\) in many ways this research continues to be marginalized within the already “stagnant, sleepy” and underfunded policies of adult education.\(^{13}\) Thus, in this chapter, I examine women’s reflections on their experiences developing alternative spaces for adult education in women-led civil society organizations and their observations on the challenges and limitations of constructing these spaces. I begin with a discussion of women-led civil society organizations as Third Spaces of adult and non-formal education. Then, I explore women’s experiences on developing adult education programs in the ‘alternative spaces’ of women-led civil society organizations.

The women participating in this study have worked in 24 women-led civil society organizations throughout Turkey. As these women reiterated throughout the study, while the alternative spaces of women-led civil society organizations have offered multiple opportunities for collective discussion and mobilization, these spaces are beset with myriad constraints and boundaries. Their experiences raise three important areas for analysis: First, participants argued that experiences of exclusion and marginalization informed their decision to develop programs in women-led civil society organizations. Second, these experiences led participants to assert that there are distinct, taken-for-granted challenges associated with the acquisition and maintenance of these


\(^{13}\) Ibid., 37.
alternative spaces. Finally, the women in this study discuss the boundaries of these spaces as well as how these boundaries limited women’s mobility within and outside of these education spaces.

**Women-led Civil Society Organizations as Third Spaces for Adult Education:**

Doreen Massey (1994) has argued that space is comprised of social relations and “since social relations are imbued with power and meaning, this view of the spatial is as an ever shifting geometry of power and signification” that is dynamic, changing and continually produced and reproduced.\(^{14}\) For Massey, space cannot be conceptualized as static or singular, but rather as a “multiplicity of spaces” that are “cross-cutting, intersecting, aligning with one-another, or existing in relations of paradox or antagonism.”\(^{15}\) By conceptualizing this geometry of space as the outcome of strategies and struggles for power between “multiple histories, multiple entanglements and multiple geographies” one can begin to see how “difference is constituted, and where differences count.”\(^{16}\)

By perceiving space as socially produced, it is possible to move away from the examination of space as ‘static’ or as a “backdrop against which social relations take place.”\(^{17}\) Through a more critical examination of space as socially produced, social relations can be seen as influencing space in material ways (construction of buildings) and political ways (the production of hegemony through culture and knowledge).\(^{18}\) Edward W. Soja (1996) suggests a “trialectic” of lived, perceived and conceived spaces which would transcend the binary of material and political space toward a “Third

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\(^{15}\) Ibid., 3.  
\(^{17}\) Susan L. Robertson, “Absences and Imaginings: The Production of Knowledge on Globalisation and Education,” *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 4, no. 2 (July 2006): 306.  
Space” that more closely reflects “space as directly lived, with all its intractability intact.” Soja discusses the possibility of Third Space within a postcolonial framework:

I find it useful to understand the postcolonial critique as a product of still another thirding-as-Othering, an assertively different and intentionally disruptive way of (re)interpreting the relations between the colonizer and the colonized, the center and the periphery. Firstworlds and Thirdworlds. More specifically, the critique addresses two metanarratives that have overarchingly dominated the Firstworld discourse on coloniality: a fundamentally capitalist metanarrative of development that wraps world history in the necessity for continuous progress and modernization; and a predominantly Marxist or socialist metanarrative of social justice that requires radical if not revolutionary transformation for social justice to be achieved.

Soja’s formulation of ‘thirding-as-Othering’ involves locating moments of diametrical opposition and then introducing a third possibility that “speaks and critiques through its otherness.” These spaces can be seen as what bell hooks (1990) calls spaces of “radical openness” that are “part of the whole but outside the main body,” providing spaces within the binary of the oppositional views of the outsider looking in and the insider looking out. This framing of Third Space provides the opportunity to move beyond what hooks and others have defined as the tendency in feminist scholarship to engage in a totalizing binary rhetoric of oppression (e.g. oppressor versus oppressed or man versus woman) and marginalization in order to examine the intersecting ways in which gender, ethnicity, religion class influence multiple forms of oppression and marginalization as well as the diversity of avenues for resistance.

In this chapter, I conceptualize women-led civil society organizations as Third Spaces for adult and non-formal education initiatives. By doing so, it becomes possible to examine women-led CSOs as lived, perceived and conceived spaces in stark contrast to the binary opposition between

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19 Edward Soja, *Thirdspace*.
21 Ibid., 61.
22 bell hooks, “Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness,” *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics* (Boston: South End, 1990), 149-150.
formal and non-formal education and among dominant neoliberal frameworks for adult education and popular education. Moreover, by visualizing these organizations as Third Spaces, it is possible to recognize the immense diversity, conflicting goals and practices of marginalization that may occur within and across these organizations. In the remaining sections of this chapter, I examine women’s reflections on their experiences developing these Third Spaces for adult education and the challenges and limitations of construction.

Exclusion and Marginalization as Motivation for Creating Women-led Education Spaces:

In examining the relationship between male hegemony and women’s education, Madeleine Arnot (2002) writes that “women have become colonized within a male-defined world, through a wide variety of ‘educational moments’ which seen separately may appear inconsequential, but which together comprise a pattern of female experience that is qualitatively different from that of men.”

Many of the women participating in this study reflected on ‘educational moments’ of exclusion that they and others had experience, as well as on how those moments influenced their decision to develop non-formal educational programs in women-led civil society organizations. For example, one woman, working in the southeast region of Turkey, discussed at length how women’s exclusion influenced the development of both her organization and education programs:

In 2002, we were the first women’s organization in the region. It was very difficult when we were established. The political conditions in Turkey, there were laws, constraints around women’s gathering. We came together during a time when women didn’t really gather. Before we developed we knew that we wanted to organize, but around what? We didn’t have awareness. We are women and we have concerns. We were frequently gathering. We had individual problems but we didn’t notice these as bigger problems. Later, we recognized that these were issues. Women’s exclusion from doing things in society or that no opportunities

are given to women in Turkey. Women aren’t in any of the fields. Women aren’t in politics, in education, in work. There is no space for women.24

For this woman and many others in this study, the act of organizing, in this case first as a group and later as a cooperative, emerged from the recognition that individual experiences of marginalization often reflected larger societal patterns of women’s exclusion. Of the 24 interviews, 19 women referenced the term dışlama, or exclusion, in 21 of the 24 interviews, participants mentioned marginalleşme, or marginalization, and all 24 interviews cited toplum, aile or devlet baskı, or societal, family or state oppression, as factors motivating their decision to develop education programs in their civil society organizations. While some participants, such as the woman above, discussed how the act of gathering together helped women to understand shared experiences of oppression, exclusion and marginalization, other women explained that over time and through continued conversations, they recognized that the forms of exclusion they experienced were as varied as the programs they offered. For one woman, currently working in an organization located in the city center of Ankara, it was the multiple, intersecting nature of exclusion which encouraged her and her fellow members to develop programs to discuss their own experiences as well as to learn from the experiences of others. She reflected on how different experiences of exclusion influenced the design and development of their programs:

In Turkey, there are many different groups of women, women of different identities. These women all experience a great deal of exclusion, but all of these differences result in different types of exclusion. What I’m referring to here is Kurdish women, Alevi women, homosexual women, trans women, older women and disabled women. There are so many differences, more than these. In the early 2000’s we began our organization in order to recognize these differences and to start conversations with women, to work together, to listen to other women’s concerns and to focus on work coming out of these conversations.25

24 Interview, April 30, 2015, translated by author.
25 Interview, May 22, 2015, translated by author.
This woman went on to explain that while their original intention was to provide an atmosphere in which they were able to share concerns and recognize differences, their subsequent projects were motivated by a desire to demonstrate how women’s different experiences were being ignored and marginalized within the broader societal context:

The reality is that women’s different circumstances are not considered. When women participate in society they experience a number of unrecognized challenges. Sometimes, they don’t know or recognize what those challenges are, or what might remove those challenges because these issues can’t be found in the public interventions. In my opinion, this is our greatest challenge. Everything else comes from this. There must be a recognition and a value placed on women’s knowledge and women’s experiences. Women, not even university graduates can say that they know much about this. There is so much knowledge and tools to be used and yet women’s knowledge has been made invaluable by society.26

For women of color, the politics surrounding the right to wear headscarves in public institutions and, in particular, the forms of exclusion experienced following the “February 28 Process” influenced the development of their organizations. The “February 28 Process” consisted of a number of strategic military efforts to force Necmettin Erbakan, the prime minister and a member of the Refah (Welfare) Party, to resign from office. The process began following the establishment of a coalition government between the conservative Welfare Party and the center-right Doğru Yol (True Path) Party, the collapse of the all-secular minority government and Erbakan’s rise to power as prime minister on June 29, 1996.27 Shortly thereafter, the government was accused of threatening secularism and Kemalism in Turkey. On February 28, 1997, the National Security Council announced the adoption of eighteen recommendations designed to curb what had been perceived as the growth of Islamism in Turkey.28 Because the military and other institutions feared that politics in Turkish society were “tipping the scales in favor of Islamism,” these recommendations, which

26 Interview, May 22, 2015, translated by author.
28 Ibid. 1.
included the campaign to remove Erbakan from office, were intended to vitiate political or societal gains made by Islamism.29 According to Günay (2001), these eighteen recommendations coupled with the resignation of Erbakan, “marked the beginning of an anti-Islamist campaign in Turkey, primarily initiated and carried out by the military, but also backed by several civilian institutions.”30

While the ‘February 28 Process’ has often been examined through the lens of its effects on political and social policies of Turkey, less attention has been given to its effects on women’s experiences of exclusion and marginalization in political and social life in Turkey. One woman working in Ankara traced her organization’s roots back to the effects of the National Security Council’s recommendations during the ‘February 28th’ Process:

Many of our members were women that had been dismissed from their jobs as a result of the February 28th Process. A large number of our members had been fired from their jobs during this time period. They were removed from civil service positions. For those reasons we worked to protect the rights of women who were members of our organization as well as women who were not members but had been affected by the laws against women wearing headscarves.31

Following the February 28 Process, a number of regulations that banned women of cover from participating in civil servant positions and all forms of higher education while wearing headscarves were put into place. These regulations were made possible by National Security Council Recommendation 13, which stated that “practices that violate the attire law and that may give Turkey an anachronistic image must be prevented.” For example, on January 12, 1998, the Minister of National Education, Hikmet Üluğbay issued a decree banning women from wearing headscarves in schools and education institutions during the 1998-1999 academic year.32 On May 8 of the same year, the Office of the High Coordinating Council for Human Rights in Turkey ruled that the

30 Ibid., 2.
31 Interview, November 07, 2014, translated by author.
headscarf was a “political symbol,” and as such, could be banned from public agencies, universities, government offices and training institutions. The ruling expressly stated that this ban did not contravene the basic human rights of Turkish citizens.33 In the following years (1999-2000), the Yüksekokşretim Kurulu, Higher Education Council (hereafter, YÖK) not only reaffirmed the ban on headscarves in all seventy-one public and private institutions in Turkey, but required all female students to submit twelve photographs of themselves without headscarves in order to receive student identification cards. Those students who did not have proper identification were denied entry to university campuses.34 Moreover, in 2001, the government amended the guidelines related to the “Regulation of the Turkish Flag,” banning any students, teachers and administrators wearing headscarves to participate in flag ceremonies.35

Many of the bans against women wearing headscarves have since been removed, but the discussion regarding the status of the headscarf as a political symbol remains. The woman from Ankara highlights the nature and challenges of these debates, as well as their implications for women and girls’ education:

For example, in our country, despite the fact that young girls at the age of 12 want to continue with school while being able to cover their heads, the laws forbade this. The ban was later removed and girls aged 10-12 that wanted to, could cover their heads. This is a really big issue in our country currently, and there is a big debate within women’s movements. Normally, women in women’s movements, they think that this issue is a form of oppression on girls by their family. It could be seen from this perspective, but this is the important thing: In reality, the issue is the oppression of the state. It’s really important to remove the oppression of the state. We are in a situation where we try to remove the oppression of society as well as the state. People are blind to this important difference.36

34 In fact, one woman, Canan Bezirgan, a student at University of Istanbul was sentenced to six months in prison on May 31, 2000 for attempting to take a test while wearing a headscarf. She was fined roughly 3 USD. See Molly Moore, “The Problem of Turkey Rest on Women’s Heads,” Washington Post, October 29, 2000.
36 Interview, November 7, 2014, translated by author.
She went on to explain the other forms of oppression, within the family and the state that women experience and which people were often “blind to:”

Outside of this issue, there are other barriers to women and girls’ participation in education and other fields. Within the family there are other forms of oppression. For example, the responsibility of looking after the child is considered only the woman’s responsibility and family and household responsibilities are considered only the woman’s. Yani, when it is possible that men share the responsibilities of the house and children, women will be able to participate in education. On the other hand, there is the oppression of the state. I believe that women should be provided the opportunity to participate in all fields of civil society equally, both women who wear headscarves and women who do not. However, there is still discrimination in certain jobs, such as uniformed occupations like soldiers, police officers, lawyers and judges. Those positions should also be open to women who wear headscarves. For those reasons, our work continues.37

The impact of the February 28 Process on women and girls’ access to public and education institutions, provides an important contribution to the literature examining the emergence of and motivations for women-led civil society organizations. In reflecting on the development of women’s NGOs, Nelly Stromquist (2008), argues:

It must be recognized that women’s NGOs did not emerge from the erosion of confidence in the capacity of democratic institutions to intervene effectively in shaping social and economic life. Rather, they emerged because the state was doing little to transform the status quo. So, it was not a response to state “erosion” but to state “blindness.”38

Yet, the responses of participants affected by the February 28 Process indicate that the factors influencing the emergence of an organization may be more complex. Here, the perceived erosion of secularism within the Turkish state, the imposition by the National Security Council and the Turkish military of what could be seen as hyper-secular responses to the threats of political and societal gains of Islamism and the state and societal “blindness” to the unique impacts of the February 28 Process on opportunities for women of cover in civil society ultimately influenced the

37 Interview, November 07, 2014, translated by author.
development of some women-led CSOs. Researchers and activists must continue to critically examine how political and social debates located at the intersection of secularism and religion can produce deeply entrenched and often widely ignored spaces of marginalization and oppression for women of cover. Yet, at the same time, these spaces may emerge as sites of resistance for women of cover against the politics of secular exclusion.

**Reflections on the Challenges of Developing Education Spaces:**

Dinçer and Tekin-Koru (2013) argue that in Turkey, where the national education strategy is rooted in the development of formal education and where there is no clear strategy regarding the nature and implementation of adult education, research on the participation structure as well as on the extent of non-formal education in Turkey is lacking.³⁹ This dearth in research extends to identifying the challenges women experience when coordinating adult education programs. Yet, as participants reiterated throughout the study, education programs located in women-led CSOs have myriad constraints and boundaries. The challenges articulated by women in this study can be grouped into three different categories: Challenges associated with funding, the constraints imposed by donors or outside actors and the locations of organizations. In this section, I explore participants’ reflections on each of these challenges as well as how they believe these challenges impact their work.

Funding Challenges and Donor Constraints:

Previous research has demonstrated that women-led NGOs and CSOs operate with insufficient funding.\(^{40}\) In order to implement and maintain their programs and projects, women working within these spaces often rely on donations from their surrounding communities or funding from state or international agencies. Some organizations were able to remain financially secure by developing profitable enterprises within their organizations, such as selling handmade products, providing training to other institutions and opening restaurants or markets. Despite the development of these income-generating projects, every woman interviewed in this study cited funding as a major challenge and limitation to their organization’s work. As one woman, working in the southeastern region of Turkey succinctly explained, “Yani, everything starts with money. If you are able to overcome the issues of money, you can easily overcome the other issues.”\(^{41}\) Another woman, working in the metropolitan center of Ankara echoes her sentiment: “Everything we do requires funding. But women’s organizations are the smallest and poorest part of society.”\(^{42}\)

As a result of the challenges associated with acquiring sufficient funding to develop and implement projects, participants found themselves either constantly applying for funding, or adjusting their programs to meet the needs or interests of donor agencies. One woman, located in a civil society organization in Ankara, reflected on the challenges of competing with other organizations for limited funding:

Every day, the number of organizations doing these types of projects is increasing. There is competition. We are not the type of organization that can make money. We need to do these projects in order to survive. When funding calls open up, everyone is applying for the same funding. There is too much competition. There are so many associations doing projects like


\(^{41}\) Interview, April 30, 2015, translated by author.

\(^{42}\) Interview, May 22, 2015, translated by author.
ours. If only there was more money for projects for women and girls in Turkey. But what can we do? We are continually chasing these sources. This work never ends.\textsuperscript{43}

However, for the women who had received funding, particularly from international donors and agencies, the work of accommodation, or matching the project to the criteria of funding agencies also felt interminable. As another participant, also located in Ankara, explains:

It’s not always possible to do some of the projects that we want because of the financial resources. Sometimes we are forced to use somewhat more constrictive methods and mechanisms in order to appease funders. This becomes a bigger problem when we are trying to do projects that require going to different areas or different cities. This can be really difficult because your criteria are not always the same as the criteria of funding sources. And when this happens you cannot do the things that you want because you may not be able to apply for or find other funding sources. This has been really, really challenging for us.\textsuperscript{44}

Scholars, such as Coe (2013), have argued that women’s NGOs and CSOs continue to experience a great deal of opposition, based on differences in cultural norms and gender identities.\textsuperscript{45} Others, such as Goetz (1995), have shown that international donor support can prove to be a double-edged sword, in that agencies may provide strength and resources to gender issues, but can also simultaneously undermine the legitimacy of gender initiatives.\textsuperscript{46} The participant’s comments here regarding the constraints placed on organizations by funding agencies, sentiments that were echoed by other participants in this study, lend support to Kümbetoğlu’s (2002) argument that in Turkey, western donors often engage in a practice of first identifying women as being in a position of need and then providing funding to shape what should be done for them.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{43} Interview, September 10, 2014, translated by author.
\textsuperscript{44} Interview, May 22, 2015, translated by author.
\textsuperscript{46} Anne Marie Goetz, The Politics of Integrating Gender into State Development Processes: Trends, Opportunities and Constraints in Bangladesh, Chile, Jamaica, Mali, Morocco and Uganda, (Geneva: UNRISD, 1995).
\textsuperscript{47} Belkis Kümbetoğlu, “Kadınlara İlişkin Projeler,” in Aksu Bora and Asena Günal (eds.) 90’larda Türkiye’de Feminizm (Istanbul: İletişim, 2002).
The constraints imposed by donors were discussed not only in reference to challenges associated with funding, but to the structures of education programs. One participant, working in the metropolitan center of Istanbul, referred to donors and foreign education coordinators as the “missionaries of women’s education,” who “come, speak and go.”48 This woman went on to explain that despite the number of education projects she had worked on in the past with outside donors or program coordinators, her organization never received the results of evaluations conducted or impacts of the research done. She explains:

You don’t have to be a member of [organization]. You can share with us something different, or whatever you want to say with Turkish women. We wish the same thing for everyone that we meet, this is also kind of an approach, to share ideas and to share feelings, not only the ideas but the feelings of being together. To be in touch is something easy... but we don’t see these people anymore. This missionary approach is at the roots of the modernist ideology, we are questioning this, questioning these relationships is very important.49

Other participants were also critical of what they also saw as a missionary approach and the tendency to uncritically transfer education projects without considering the context or the participants involved. One participant, working in the metropolitan center of Ankara, spoke at length about the ironies of education projects coordinated by groups that did not understand the needs of the groups, which she defined as the largest obstacles to her organization’s work:

What are the obstacles to our work? I know one ironic example. For example, in one area of the city there was one of those UN-type projects and with the Development Agency they opened a carpet class under the name of an “occupational skills” course. But there was no mechanism for women to sell the things that they produced. There was no infrastructure, no logistics, no feasible area to do this. The project was really realized more in a symbolic form. And, as a result, this is how the project went: Women went, they would learn about topics like birth control and breast cancer. But you know, the women that were going to this project didn’t even speak Turkish, they spoke Kurdish. Those who were going to the education courses didn’t speak the language of the courses. And this isn’t unique. Most of the time, these are the types of obstacles that occur. They establish hierarchies in relationships, in the areas where women speak, in the places where education programs are

48 Interview March 17, 2015, translated by author.
49 Interview, March 17, 2015, translated by author.
designed…they never actually consider women’s daily lives. Or they are talking about things that aren’t relevant or that women can’t actually do in their real lives.50

The challenges of working with outside donors and funding agencies, articulated by this participant and others in the study, in many ways reflect what Shahrzad Mojtab and Sara Carpenter (2011) refer to as the practice of learning by dispossession. Through their research on U.S. projects of ‘democracy promotion’ and ‘civic engagement’ with women’s NGOs in Iraq, the authors argue that while the pedagogy, practice and politics of democracy training programs may provide participants with new skills and knowledge, these programs often produce education spaces that are both dislocated and disconnected from the realities of women’s experiences.51 Women in this study discussed at length the experiences of feeling disconnected and dislocated from education programs funded by international agencies, academics and gender experts. Their experiences working within these constraints was examined in greater detail in Chapter Six, which focused on gender-based violence interventions in Turkey.

*Location of Courses*

The emerging literature on women-led CSOs and non-formal education recognizes these organizations for their potential to provide ‘safe’ or ‘secure’ spaces for women to organize, strategize and advance issues that challenge patriarchal gender norms and power relations.52 Such spaces are crucial to political action, for as Stromquist (2006) argues, “to acquire empowerment, women must occupy an autonomous space with a clear political project.”53 While the concept of ‘safety’ and the

50 Interview, March 11, 2015, translated by author.
development of ‘safe spaces’ has been a fundamental element of feminist pedagogy, and women-led CSOs are thought to provide safe spaces for women’s non-formal education programs, there is little research regarding challenges experienced in acquiring, developing and maintaining locations for these programs.

Yet, fifteen participants in this study repeatedly raised the challenges associated with the location of their programs. Due to the expenses associated with rent, many participants noted that they shared office space with other organizations to reduce costs or borrowed space from friends or close acquaintances. As once participant, located in Ankara explained, “the only reason we are able to have such a beautiful office space here is because it is one of our friends’ office spaces.” Others, who were not fortunate enough to have space in more central areas of the city, discussed the implications of location on both the coordinators and participants in the education programs. One woman, who was living in Istanbul, but had developed programs in multiple cities throughout Turkey, reflected on a program she had coordinated in the early 2000s. She raised the issue of location, suggesting that individuals do not take into account the ease of access to these locations, particularly those located outside the city center:

After the earthquake, we had opened 2 workshops in the region for 45 women. We established a building, a very big one, where there were some classrooms and other facilities. This was established for approximately 250 students so that occupational courses may be held there. But it was a bit far away from the city center. If I say the kilometer, it doesn’t

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56 Interview, May 22, 2015, translated by author.

57 Here, this participant is referring to the 1999 Izmit Earthquake, which occurred on August 17. The earthquake had a moment magnitude of 7.6 and a maximum Mercalli intensity of IX (violent). The earthquake lasted for 37 seconds and approximately 17,000 were killed. The earthquake also left over half a million people homeless, damaging the economic and social welfare of the region. See Vasile Marza, “On the Death Toll of the 1999 Izmit (Turkey) Major Earthquake,” ESC General Assembly Papers (Potsdam: European Seismological Commission, 5 March 2008).
make sense to someone from the outside. But in a small city, psychologically, you have to go through country-side roads although the potential participants were living in the center of the city. At first there was not a problem, but then the municipality started gossiping about us and about the women who came, so woman stopped coming after 2007.\textsuperscript{58}

This participant raises two issues that were echoed by other women in the study. First, women expressed the thought that although most of the women who would potentially participate or volunteer for their organizations lived closer to the center of the city, due to rent and other financial constraints, they could only afford to acquire spaces located outside of the city center. As another woman, working in Ankara, explained, “\textit{Yani}, even in Ankara, the capital city of our country, there are women who don’t have enough money to take the bus or to go somewhere, like Kızılay or Kuğulu Park.\textsuperscript{59} How will they get here?” Many participants explained that the costs associated with renting a location often forced them to temporarily or permanently close their organizations. One woman, who has been working in the southeastern region of Turkey for more than twenty years explains that even when projects are seen to have had an impact on the community, without financial or others forms of support, programs are forced to close their doors:

We originally had a literacy project. But to do this type of project, you need a serious amount of money. We established our group with our own savings, emptied our pockets, our own piggy banks, our children’s spending money. But after a while the price for rent increased too much and we couldn’t pay it. There were none of these EU-type projects then, so all of the women paid from their own pockets. But after some time, we were forced to close our doors. When we closed, women in the community collected signatures from the neighborhoods, to get support from officials so that we didn’t close. They thought, let’s just go to the official and they will support you. But we received no support and we closed.\textsuperscript{60}

While some participants focused on the expenses associated with establishing a place for their organization, others argued that the perception of these programs by others as well as their location were crucial to their long-term viability. Previous research in Turkey has suggested that

\textsuperscript{58} Interview, March 17, 2015, translated by author.
\textsuperscript{59} Kızılay and Kuğulu Park are two common outdoor areas frequented by people living in Ankara (and tourists visiting Ankara).
\textsuperscript{60} Interview, April 30, 2015, translated by author.
locations owned or operated by state-run institutions have been perceived as less threatening, “safer” places by women’s husbands, thus facilitating women’s ability to attend these education and training programs.\textsuperscript{61} The results of this research were echoed by a participant whose organization operates in multiple neighborhoods throughout Istanbul:

When you’re considering the development of a women’s education center in a neighborhood, a place that women can easily access, the topic of men will inevitably come up. Finding an appropriate location or center is really difficult. In the past, it was much harder. Sometimes, if it’s supported by the state, or it’s located in a state building, it can provide the appropriate space, but usually this is not enough.\textsuperscript{62}

This participant continued to explain that over time, it has become much more common for women to go to classes or attend education courses and this made it somewhat less challenging to coordinate programs. Another participant also explained that while it has remained challenging to find appropriate locations for education programs, it was far more difficult in the past:

In 2002, we were the first women’s organization established in our region. It was very difficult when we were established. Women gathering, the conditions in Turkey, the laws and political conditions affected women’s gathering. We came together during a time when women didn’t really gather together. For example, we couldn’t gather in a hotel, even for a meeting. It was shameful for women to go to a hotel, forbidden.\textsuperscript{63}

While a number of participants reflected on the challenges of finding appropriate locations, most suggested that the current limitations to their programs had less to do with the geography of education programs and more to do with women’s limited mobility within and outside of these spaces. In the final section of this chapter, I examine the various types of limitations on women’s mobility highlighted by women participating in this study.

\textsuperscript{62} Interview, October 27, 2014, translated by author.
\textsuperscript{63} Interview, April 30, 2015, translated by author.
Women’s Mobility within and outside the Spaces of Adult Education:

Although women-led CSOs have been lauded as ‘safe spaces’ for gender-transformative initiatives in academic literature, less attention has been given to the limitations on mobility women experience both within and outside of these spaces. Massey (1994) argues that “spaces and places are not only themselves gendered but in their being so, they both reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood.” The production of alternative spaces and the subsequent ‘escape’ from the spatial confines of areas that have been socially constructed as ‘women’s places’ (e.g., the private sphere) to these more public spaces is not without implication. While crossing over and between these spaces may appear inconsequential, access to and movement between these spaces can become a source of anxiety and vulnerability, as the very movement threatens the hegemonic social relations both in public and private spheres. Consequently, the act of limiting women’s mobility within and outside spaces and places can serve as a powerful form of subordination and as a strategy to reclaim patriarchal control in terms of both identity and space.

For some participants in this study, the family often influenced women’s mobility within and outside of these programs. For example, as one participant explained, “Women’s families do not support us…. We can’t even persuade our own families to support us!” Another participant, located in Istanbul, explains the challenges of gaining community support not only for the organization but also related to how perceptions of family members influence support for education programs for women:

The number of individuals supporting these types of programs is really small. For illiterate women, explaining programs to the community may not be possible. Sometimes even

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64 Nelly P. Stromquist, “Adult Education of Women for Social Transformation: Reviving the Promise, Continuing the Struggle,” 35.
65 Doreen Massey, Space Place and Gender, 179.
66 Doreen Massey, Space Place and Gender, 179-180.
67 Interview, April 30, 2015, translated by author.
explaining it to family members, neighbors, even relatives, they may not support it. After you become a certain age, people think, what will you do with what you will learn, and others may even think that after a certain age you cannot learn at all anymore. It’s these types of beliefs that tear apart these programs.68

This participant went on to explain that even once women were enrolled in the courses, there were other limitations, such as attempts by families to control what should be taught to women participating in the courses. She adds:

There are attitudes like, “Okay, teach the ABC’s, but don’t go beyond that.” Do not approach the issue of consciousness-raising. Do not explain women’s rights. This is a challenge we struggle to overcome.69

Another woman participating in the study and working in the southeastern region of Turkey also noted that literacy programs were often considered acceptable by families, as long as the programs did not include ‘feminist’ topics, including women’s rights and consciousness-raising. However, she also noted that it is difficult to differentiate whether changes in women’s confidence, self-esteem and, at times, the frequency of interaction with other women in the community is the outcome of literacy programs, programs geared at consciousness-raising and women’s rights, or some combination of both. She highlighted this through a story about an interaction with an angry older man in the community, who approached her after his wife had finished a set of literacy courses:

Once, I ran into Necla’s70 husband. He said, “What are you doing? Goddamn you,” he said. “What happened amca72?” I said. “You taught Necla how to read and now Necla is never at home. Every day, she writes a note, ‘I am going to my friend’s, don’t worry about me,’ pastes it on the door and goes.73

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68 Interview, October 27, 2014, translated by author.
69 Interview, October 27, 2014, translated by author.
70 This name has been altered from the original transcript.
71 Teyze is a term commonly used as a term of respect toward an older woman.
72 Amca is a term commonly used as a term of respect toward an older man.
73 Interview, April 30, 2015, translated by author.
The participants’ reflections in this section demonstrate that while there may be great potential in the practice of developing ‘safe spaces’ for women’s education, these spaces are neither static nor removed from the social, political and cultural norms that control women’s participation in public spheres. The external constraints and limitations placed on women’s mobility within and outside of these spaces by husbands, relatives and members of the community were extensive, and overcoming these challenges emerged as a struggle for many participants in this study. In Chapter Five, I examined the concept of limited mobility in greater depth, specifically as it relates to job-skills and training programs, while in Chapter Six, I explored women’s mobility in programs to combat and prevent gender-based violence.

**Conclusion:**

In this chapter, I examined women’s reflections on their experiences developing alternative spaces for adult education in women-led CSOs. By framing adult and non-formal education programs in women-led CSOs as third spaces it becomes possible to examine these spaces as lived, perceived and conceived in stark contrast to the binary oppositions constructed between formal and non-formal education and among dominant neoliberal frameworks for adult education and the more social justice-oriented, but still ‘phallocentric paradigm’ of popular education.

Within the academic literature on adult education, women-led CSOs have, in recent years, emerged in recent years as important, alternative sites for non-formal education that seek to transform gendered social relations could occur. While previous studies have suggested that women-led CSOs can be important sites of gender-transformative educational initiatives, the participants in this study offered reflections on the specific experiences of exclusion, marginalization

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74 Doreen Massey, *Space Place and Gender*, 3.
76 Nelly P. Stromquist, “Adult Education of Women for Social Transformation,” 35.
and oppression that influenced their decisions to development education programs in women-led CSOs.

Of particular importance here are the unique and often under-examined experiences of exclusion women of cover face when navigating the debates between laicism and freedom of religious expression. As Yılmaz (2011) argues, Islamic women have historically mobilized in civil society organizations because these organizations have made their representation in the public sphere possible. While the ban on headscarves in education institutions has been removed in Turkey, the debates highlighted by participants in this chapter, as well as debates elsewhere, indicate that scholars and activists must continue to be mindful of the ramifications of such a ban, not only on women’s economic and political opportunities in the public sector, but also on their access to formal education opportunities from middle school onward. In examining the politics of the veil, Lila Abu-Lughod (2013) reminds us that “we should not underestimate the ways that veiling has entered political contests across the world.” It is clear from the participants’ reflections on the effects of the ‘February 28 Process’ that we must be critically aware of how veiling has entered the politics of education and adversely influenced access to educational opportunities for women of cover.

Furthermore, participants in this study highlighted the often taken-for-granted challenges associated with the acquisition and maintenance of these spaces. These challenges included, but were not limited to scarcity of funding, competition amongst organizations for available funds and program constraints imposed by donor agencies. However, the location of adult education

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78 In France, intense political debates have surfaced regarding the right to wear headscarves in public institutions. As I write the final analysis of this study, the Prime Minister of France, Manuel Valls, has called for a ban on headscarves in universities, citing that “Islam is incompatible with the values of the Republic.” See French PM Calls for Ban on Headscarves at Universities,” The Guardian (13 April 2016) accessed April 13, 2016 at http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/13/french-pm-ban-islamic-headscarves-universities-manuel-valls.

programs, both as physical and perceived spaces emerged as the most common challenge amongst participants in this study. First, the responses were consistent with previous studies in Turkey regarding the challenges of finding physical locations that are easily accessible to women in the community. This meant finding locations in the city center that were within walking distance of participants’ homes and were, if possible, connected to established community centers. As multiple participants emphasized in their interviews, while the actual distance might seem negligible and the location accessible to some by looking at a map, many of the women participating in these programs had neither a car nor money for bus fare to travel to these locations. The accessibility of locations for women’s adult education programs is crucial to both their viability and long-term sustainability.

Finally, women participating in this study reflected on challenges and limitations to women’s mobility that were influenced by the perceptions of what these spaces represented. For participants, perceptions of these programs and their pedagogies held by husbands, relatives or members of the community often limited women’s mobility within and outside of these spaces. While women-led CSOs can serve as alternative education spaces for identity formation and women’s collective mobilization, it is important to remember that these spaces are neither static nor removed from the social, political and cultural norms that control women’s participation in public spheres. Chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate the ways in which these spaces have become conceptualized in relation to social, political, cultural and economic processes. In the final chapter of this study, I explore, from the perspectives of women participating in this study, how these spaces can be reconstructed to increase women’s mobility and educational, economic, political and social opportunities.

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81 Doreen Massey, Space Place and Gender, 3.
Chapter Eight:

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

This dissertation project began as an exploration into the margins of adult education, by “starting off” research from the experiences of education coordinators located in women-led civil society organizations (CSOs) in Turkey. While there are hundreds of organizations I was unable to visit while conducting fieldwork and whose stories may thus not be represented in this study, in reflecting on the insights offered by the twenty-four women who shared their experiences here, it is clear that greater attention needs to be paid to the opportunities as well as challenges for women’s education offered within these alternative education spaces.

In Chapter 1, building off of Boaventura de Sousa Santos’ assertion that “there can be no global social justice without global cognitive justice,” I argued that the marginalization of women’s experiences and knowledges in the academic discourse of adult education both violates global cognitive justice and prevents the potential role of adult education as a mechanism for global social justice. While the term ‘social justice’ is often widely used within the field of Comparative Education, much less emphasis seems to be placed on the important role of cognitive justice within social justice frameworks. Embedded within the term ‘cognitive justice’ is not only the recognition of both cultural and epistemological diversity but also the acknowledgment of the right for this diversity of knowledges to co-exist. As researchers, global social justice necessarily requires that we recognize the diversity of alternative, sometimes incommensurable knowledges.

By framing my argument within a cognitive justice framework, I intended to demonstrate the ways in which women’s knowledges have been actively produced as nonexistent within an androcentric canon of knowledge on adult education. Susan L. Robertson’s (2009) call for the application of a critical theory of space in the sociology of education was an effective conceptual framework to demonstrate the active production of an androcentric adult education space and its implications for women’s adult education. By using this framework in Chapter 2, I outlined the ways in which adult education has emerged as a tool to meet the technical-rational demands of global capitalism as well as the ways in which this development has had particularly deleterious effects for women, whose complex and contradictory experiences continue to be largely neglected not only in the discourses of adult education, but also in development and economic literature.

Robertson’s six propositions for studying the sociology of education from a critical spatial analytic provided an important starting point for examining the production of knowledge as influenced by social relations and a struggles for power. My study borrowed from Robertson’s propositions and I argued that these propositions could be extended further to theorize a more critical analysis of space as integral to the sociology of education and gender, as well as to more explicitly account for the unique ways in which the social relations of gender may influence space in both material and political ways. My extensions of these propositions (italicized) helped to better frame the underlying assertions I made in the execution of this project:

1. Social relations are both gendered and latent in space and reproduced through systems such as education;
2. Education spaces are a product of gendered social relations and histories of marginalizing women’s

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3. Education spaces are produced by practices and organizational processes that are seen as gender-explicit and seemingly gender-neutral in their application; 

4. Education spaces are polymorphic but differences have been subsumed by the universalizing discourse of neoliberalism; 

5. Education spaces are dynamic geometries of power and social relations where women’s differences must be recognized, including the intersecting dynamics of race, class, disability, ethnicity, religion, historicity and culture; and 

6. Education spaces and subjectivities are the outcome of a dialectical interaction but have been disguised as neutral, objective, apolitical, abistorical and inclusive.

The responses offered by participants in this study demonstrate that knowledge and education are socially situated in historical, political, economic and social contexts. These contexts not only contribute to, but are also the consequence of the practice of marginalizing of women’s experiences and knowledges. By starting this project from the experiences of education coordinators located in women-led CSOs, my research underscores how women’s adult education, an often assumed mechanism for the promotion of social justice, gender equality and human rights has not only become a “site of engagement between state, non-state and supra-state organizations,” but
also a site that reflects and wrestles with some of the most pressing and seemingly intractable issues limiting the global movement for gender equality and social change.

In this project, it was necessary to provide the historical context of both women’s movements and education as well as the existing national data reports on adult education in Turkey. While I engaged in extensive archival and document research in order to provide the historical context discussed in Chapter Four, there are a few limitations worth noting here. In their book, *Women’s Memory: The Problem of Sources*, D. Fatma Türe and Birsen Talay Keşıoğlu (2011) argue that until the founding of the Women’s Library and Information Center in 1990, there was no attempt to collect, catalogue or preserve women’s histories or women’s archives. Before 1990, it was extremely rare for a women’s archive to be located within an institution and it usually required that the women in question either be famous or members of a notable family. While Chapter Four offers an attempt to incorporate as diverse a set of perspectives as possible, I recognize that the identity of whose memory is recognized within these pages is limited by the very tradition of knowledge production I criticize in Chapter Two of this study.

Keeping this important limitation in mind throughout the study, I focused my analysis on the experiences of women participating in this study. Twenty-one of these women had been working with or within civil society organizations since the mid-1990s. Most of these twenty-one women reflected not only on the current challenges their organizations experienced, but also on the challenges they experienced when they initially founded their programs. While their reflections shed light on important issues that scholars and activists grapple with regarding the development and promotion of women-led non-formal education programs, they also served as important herstories of subaltern, non-formal education activities taking place in Turkey from the mid-1990s until today.

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When possible, I incorporated these stories into the analysis in hopes to contribute to the process of expanding the collection of women’s memories of the formation of adult and non-formal education programs. At the same time, knowing that the reflections and stories highlighted by participants in this study began long before the development of their organizations and that these stories are often not captured in women’s archives, I recognize the great potential of future research projects to expand upon the collective memory of women’s experiences developing adult and non-formal education programs.

Furthermore, the decision to interview program coordinators rather than participants in the programs stemmed from my desire to understand the processes by which these programs emerge and the ways in which gender, inequality and marginalization are conceptualized by those involved in the construction and promotion of women’s adult education programs. Considering the recent literature regarding the challenges of analyzing or evaluating the impacts or outcomes of gender equality in educational programs, I focused on the ways in which coordinators conceptualized gender, equality and even education differently and the ways in which those conceptualizations informed the construction of their respective adult education programs. The arguments offered by women participating in this study demonstrate that we have much more work to do to understand the myriad processes that inform the development of adult education programs and that these processes must be considered in the study and evaluation of programs related to adult education and gender equality.

Returning to the propositions outlined above, I argued that social relations are both gendered and latent in space and reproduced through systems such as education. Chapter 5, which explored women’s critical reflections on job-skills and occupational courses in Turkey provides extensive support for the ways in which non-formal education courses reproduce patriarchal social relations that limit women’s
economic mobility in Turkey. The women participating in this study demonstrate that the effectiveness of these courses is largely constrained by the absence of women in decision-making mechanisms as well as the growing influence of the government’s ‘neopatriarchal approach’ to women. This absence of women in decision-making mechanisms not only allows men to control the structure and opportunities provided by these courses but permits the most intransigent problems facing women in both formal and informal labor markets to remain hidden from critical evaluation or transformative change.

Women in this study spoke directly to the implications of focusing solely on education programs that meet the technical-rational demands of global capitalism while failing to consider the complex and contradictory effects these programs have had on women. This argument was particularly salient in light of the responses of the participant who reflected on women who tried to sell products at high-end alışveriş merkezleri (shopping malls) as well as for women who had developed successful economic enterprises, only to have those programs co-opted by powerful men in the community. Experts and policy makers who continue to promote women’s education, both in the academic literature and development policies, must recognize that these spaces are dynamic geometries of power between not only men and women but also between different communities of women. The results of this chapter demonstrate the assertions made in proposition number five, namely that in the development of women’s education spaces, women’s differences must be recognized, including the intersecting dynamics economic power with race, class, disability, ethnicity, religion, historicity and culture.

Additionally, I asserted that education spaces and subjectivities are the outcome of a dialectical interaction but have been disguised as neutral, objective, apolitical, abistorical and inclusive. Chapter 6, which explored women’s experiences and reflections on implementing gender-based violence interventions speaks
to women’s struggles interacting with the state to both raise awareness and introduce legal mechanisms to eradicate gender-based violence in Turkey. Participants identified the many ways in which growing conservatism in state institutions has not only functioned to define women’s place within the family structure, but also to *erase* the history and impact of women’s movements in Turkey. The implications of growing conservatism in state institutions became particularly salient for women in the promotion and practice of gender-based violence interventions. Women in this study argued that this increasing conservatism, the dominance of patriarchal values and the state’s superficial response to gender violence served to dispossess women of the mechanisms necessary to combat violence in their lives.

Multiple participants noted that the state’s anemic response to gender violence informed women’s decisions to coordinate awareness programs in women-led civil society organizations. As these participants explained, while these organizations served as alternative spaces for gender-based violence interventions, these spaces are not detached from, but instead, are very much constrained by the surrounding political climate of both the state and international community. At the national level, these constraints included shutting down women’s shelters, the restructuring of the National Women’s Ministry, the “undemocratic” selection of country representatives for the Istanbul Convention and the emotional exhaustion that occurs when women are tasked with the sole responsibility of developing and implementing gender initiatives. At the international level, insufficient funding and the structure of ‘women’s rights’ programs coordinated by development agencies not only constrained what education coordinators were able to do with their programs, but also, as participants highlighted often ran in stark contrast to the interests and needs of women participating in these programs.
Findings in this chapter not only address the limitations of an institutional logic that aligns adult education with economic development, but also call into question the emancipatory, or even democratic potential of adult education programs instituted and organized by the state. It is clear from the responses of participants in this study that focusing on the state as the primary unit of analysis not only obscures the ways in which women are tasked with the responsibility of implementing gender initiatives, but also deflects attention away from the structural and institutional conditions that both reproduce gender inequality and contribute to the manifestation of gender violence.

While some scholars, such as Torres (2013) have suggested that adult education has “lost its transformative and empowering vision and mission,”12 and others have suggested that popular education is often linked to social movements and civil society actors,13 research that critically assesses the types of governance models in which women’s adult education could potentially thrive, or the implications of change in governance models on women’s adult education opportunities is sorely lacking. The state is not a static entity, but is rather comprised of individuals who participate in a variety of decision-making mechanisms that have the potential to encourage or constrain opportunities for adult education. Participants’ discussion of the changing nature of the National Women’s Ministry in Turkey makes this point is made glaringly clear. Furthermore, the challenges created by this dilemma are further compounded by the fact that few women participate in decision-making mechanisms, a point made repeatedly by participants featured in Chapters 5-7.

Future studies must continue to look ‘beyond the state’ to examine the interactions between state and non-state actors that influence and shape adult education policy and practice. Expanding

12 Torres, Political Sociology of Adult Education,” 20.
the focus beyond state-centric models allows researchers to not only allows recognize the role of
civil society actors within this dynamic, but also the limitations imposed on these actors by the state
and the international community. At the same time, such a model provides a framework for
researchers to examine the ways in which civil society actors and social movements can also
influence and shape practices at the state level. As highlighted at the end of Chapter 6, social media
campaigns for gender equality and the eradication of gender-violence may be an important avenue
for challenging the limitations and reshaping governance models created by an increasingly
conservative and patriarchal state.

Furthermore, in Chapter 2, I argued that *education spaces are a product of gendered social relations
and histories of marginalizing women’s experiences*. In Chapter 7, I examined the ways in which the spaces
of adult education have emerged as a product of gendered social relations and histories of
marginalizing women’s experiences in Turkey. As previously noted, most of the women participating
in this study have been working with or within women-led civil society organizations for over twenty
years. Participants offered specific instances and histories of exclusion and marginalization as well as
examples of the challenges and forms of marginalization they continue to experience while working
within these spaces. As the participants demonstrate, it is worth recounting how power and
intersectionality function in ways that influence different experiences of exclusion and
marginalization.

In particular, Chapter 7 underscored the unique and underexamined experiences of
marginalization of ‘women of cover.’ One participant explained at length the political, economic and
educational impacts of the February 28th process on women who wear the headscarf. As this
participant suggests, what might be perceived as familial or religious oppression to some may be
seen as state oppression to others. Her comments remind us that veiling has often been
misrepresented as a form of oppression, or the “quintessential sign of women’s unfreedom.” As Abu-Lughod (2013) argues, we “should not underestimate the ways that veiling has entered the political contests across the world.”

Researchers and activists must continue to critically examine how political and social debates located at the intersection of secularism and religion can produce deeply entrenched and often widely ignored spaces of marginalization, oppression and secular exclusion for women of cover. At the same time, as future studies continue to examine the politics of the veil, we must remain mindful of intersectionality and practice thinking across differences without collapsing them. In her recent book, “Beyond Headscarf Culture in Turkey’s Retail Sector,” Feyda Sayan-Cengiz (2016) notes that while there has been a recent increase in the number of academic studies examining the experiences of women of cover, the scholarly debate on the headscarf has focused almost exclusively on middle-class and university educated women and their “struggle to gain recognition of Islamic identity in the state-monitored public sphere.” Moving forward, researchers must remain mindful to the ways in which studies have the potential to reinforce structures of power and marginalize women’s diverse experiences not only by focusing on the state as a unit of analysis, but also through the practice of collapsing important differences within and amongst groups.

Moreover, although women-led CSOs have served as alternative, subaltern spaces to the adult education programs coordinated by the state, education coordinators participating in this study argued that there are distinct, taken-for-granted challenges associated with the acquisition and maintenance of these spaces. Women noted that there are boundaries to not only the educational opportunities offered in the spaces of women-led CSOs but to women’s mobility within and outside


of these spaces. In Chapter 7, I argued that the act of limiting women’s mobility within and outside of these spaces and places can serve as a powerful form of subordination and as a strategy to reclaim patriarchal control in terms of both identity and space. As participants explained, while crossing over and between spaces may appear inconsequential, access to and movement between these spaces can become a source of anxiety and vulnerability, as the very movement threatens the hegemonic social relations both in public and private spheres. Academic researchers and policy experts must continue to recognize the concerns associated with funding, geographical location, physical mobility and curricula that in the promotion and development of alternative spaces for women’s adult education.

Finally, throughout this study, I refer to Nancy Fraser’s (1997) argument that civil society organizations can serve as “subaltern counterpublics” with the potential to “invent and circulate counterdiscourses.” Here, I return to a question I raised in Chapter Two: How might alternative standpoints on adult education alter how adult education spaces are produced? An important contribution of this study was the many insights offered by participants for policy reform in the area of adult and non-formal education. In the following pages, I suggest a starting point from which to build more inclusive spaces and pedagogies of adult and non-formal education. The suggestions offered by women participating in this study serve not only as policy recommendations that could dismantle patriarchal institutional practices but also as reforms that have the potential to change the institutions themselves. These recommendations can and should be considered in approaches to promoting women’s access and experiences within both formal and non-formal education programs.

**Recognizing Funding Constraints**

- Commitment to the sustainability of women’s education programs requires financial commitment, not just rhetorical commitment. Programs require far more funding than they

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currently receive. Every participant in this study expressed that they did not have the funds necessary to sustain their organizations.

- Even those who had received funding from donor agencies noted that the funding was insufficient to produce the outcomes they, or the funding agencies, desired. While there is increased rhetorical commitment to gender equality and improving women’s access to educational opportunities, this commitment has not been matched by the necessary funding to make this commitment a reality in practice.

**Recognizing Spaces for Women’s Education:**

- Time and again, participants noted that there was ‘no space’ for women. This argument was not only a criticism of non-formal education institutions, but also extended to political, social and economic decision-making mechanisms.

- Women and the diversity of women’s experiences must be taken seriously and incorporated into policies and practices at educational, political, social and economic levels. Women-led civil society organizations offer an important starting point from which to gain insight into how and in what ways women’s experiences can be better incorporated into national policies regarding gender equality and education.

- Researchers, activists and policy makers must recognize the importance of intersectionality when examining women’s diverse experiences with exclusion.

- The establishment of a National Women’s Machinery is not *prima facie* evidence of state support for women’s rights. Research approaches that examine the emergence of an institution without examining how said institution changes over time fail to capture the implications of developing programs ‘just for show’ and the implications of this practice on the internalization of and struggle for gender equality in local contexts.

**Recognizing Donor Constraints**

- Donor and funding agencies must recognize and take seriously cultural differences at the local level and how those differences inform and influence the construction of educational programs.

- Participants noted that donor agencies often sent ‘evaluation experts’ from outside of Turkey at the end of the program, who knew little about the program, the context regarding its development or even the nature of the project funded by the evaluator’s organization. This often resulted in extensive confusion on the part of both the donor agency and the organization funded by the donor. Ensuring that the donor agency, its evaluation team and the funded organization are all ‘on the same page’ is crucial to the implementation and analysis of the program evaluation.
• Funding agencies must continue communication with organizations after evaluating the program: Multiple participants noted that funding agencies (from outside of Turkey) often conducted evaluations without providing feedback to the organizations that would help improve their education program design or the impact.

Location of Programs

• The location is crucial to the long-term sustainability and viability of these programs.

• Programs must be held in a central location that is easily accessible by foot.

• When choosing a location, organizers and funders must recognize that women participating in these programs often do not own a vehicle nor do they possess the financial means to ride public transportation to get to education programs.

• Programs (and funders of programs) must recognize that participants have multiple responsibilities that often complicate their ability to attend programs. When possible, donors should offer funding for programs so they can provide:
  ○ Childcare options so that participants have the option to bring their children with them to class.
  ○ Washing machines, which were also considered beneficial for participants in a number of programs.

Course Methodology

• Donors and program coordinators must consider differences in language, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic background as well as other factors. Programs must be structured with the consideration of these differences or they will fail to meet the needs of those involved in the program. As the participants suggested, this is particularly salient when programs are coordinated in Turkish but the participants speak Kurdish.

• Donors and program coordinators must consider the differences in women’s experiences with exclusion and oppression. This is particularly significant when considering experiences of exclusion women of cover have experienced in the pursuit of education and employment opportunities in Turkey.

• Course pedagogy must start off from the experiences of women participating in the programs. Organizers, particularly outside coordinators, must take caution when employing references that do not reflect the experiences of women participating in the program.

• Courses, particularly job-skills, occupational and entrepreneur courses, must provide more than skills training. They should be conceived and developed as long-term courses that provide institutional support after the initial training program and while an individual is setting up their own business.
• Job-skills courses must incorporate modules on discrimination in the workforce to recognize the injustices women may experience in the private sector.

Theoretical Implications:

As I wrote the final analysis chapters of this study, I was fortunate to engage in a conversation regarding the choice to use a critical spatial analytic as a framework of analysis for this study. After explaining the frameworks from which I had borrowed for the purpose of this study, she astutely asked me whether the term ‘space’ constituted a metaphor for the purpose of the project and my own analysis. I thought a great deal about this question, about how it emerged as a consequence of the ways in which I might be implicitly discussing space in the framework and analysis of this project as well as the recent emergence and popularity of ‘spatial’ approaches to education research and the important debates surrounding the conceptualization of these approaches.

While I have sought to make my argument more explicit throughout Chapter Two, it is important to reiterate here that I do not see the examination of the social relations of space as a metaphor for the more commonly used approaches to space, such as geographical sites of learning (e.g., the classroom, the school and communities of practice). Metaphors are implicit comparisons between two things that share common characteristics. Metaphors are used for rhetorical effect, often with the assumption that the two things being compared are not actually the same. I want to stress here that social relations both comprise and occupy very real and tangible space, in the same manner and with the same implications as the construction or design of a classroom or school.

Specifically, the act of producing, disseminating and prioritizing Eurocentric, ‘western’ forms of knowledge as authoritative references in the fields of both adult education and gender is a social practice. By failing to acknowledge the contradictions, inadequacies and limitations of these
perspectives or through the practice of neglecting alternative perspectives, we reify the possible states and spaces of knowledge that are both available and valued while simultaneously marginalizing and silencing the experiences and voices of Others. However, because social relations are produced, they can be reproduced in ways that recognize contradictions, conflicted subjectivities and offer new possibilities for social and cognitive justice in the spaces of education. This requires recognizing the spaces occupied by the production of knowledge as something more than a metaphor—perhaps as social, political and economic systems that interact with, influence and shape geographical sites of inequality.

Moving past the concept of the production of knowledge as a metaphor in analyses of space requires the recognition of the inadequacies and limitations of one’s own research and methodological framework. With this in mind and in addition to the limitations I have already highlighted throughout this study, it is important that I recognize and am held accountable for the ways in which I have framed certain concepts in this analysis. In particular, I am aware that the term ‘neoliberalism’ is now widely used in various research approaches to Comparative Education and other academic fields. There are multiple perspectives on what constitutes neoliberalism, its history and its effects on political, economic and social aspects of society. Furthermore, I recognize that the emergence of neoliberal economic reforms is wrought with complexity and that the policy intentions, which ultimately influenced the formation of the liberalization policies known as the “Washington Consensus,” are in many ways different from the consequences of neoliberal reforms over the past three decades.18

While I acknowledge the myriad accounts of the rise of neoliberal policies and their implications, in this study, I chose to examine the specific ways in which neoliberal reforms have

informed the development of adult education policies and the consequences of this development on both the marginalization of women’s knowledges in the adult education literature and women’s adult education programs in Turkey. In Chapters 2 and 7, where I examine neoliberal reforms in depth, remain within the scope of that goal.

Finally, when I initially embarked on this project, I would have never anticipated the political and social changes that have taken place in Turkey during the time in which I was completing this study. Furthermore, I could not have anticipated the extensive international media attention given to the most recent events regarding women’s rights, increased violence in both metropolitan and rural areas and criticism of the government’s efforts to limit freedom of speech throughout Turkey. Where relevant to the current project, I expanded upon areas of analysis to capture the changing political, social and economic dynamics and how those affected the arguments I make in this study. In concluding this study, I am aware that these events continue and may influence the opportunities as well as the challenges women experience as they continue to develop and promote non-formal educational initiatives.

**Future Research:**

In addition to exploring the limitations, alternative interpretations and unanswered questions raised throughout this analysis, future studies should continue to unpack and explore the potential contributions of a critical theory of space to the sociology of education and gender. I did not employ a methodological approach that explicitly examined issues such as territory, place, scale and network in this study, but future studies could be build on the findings here through an approach which focused on these spatial ‘turns.’ In particular, future projects could draw from the literature of feminist geography to map and identify the extent to which women-led CSOs are participating in adult education activities. Furthermore, while I collected curricula for the purpose of triangulation in
this study, future studies could focus their research on critical content analyses of these curricula, conceptualizing these as potential “counter-narratives” to adult education curricula promoted by national governments or development agencies.

Finally, as a program coordinator, teacher and activist, one woman participating in this study captured the possibilities and challenges inherent in another education space:

Women’s organizations work very hard and women do change because of these programs. But unfortunately we are forced to tell these women, “You’ve learned a lot of things, you are aware. Now you see things in other ways. But the world around you has not changed.” This is the most difficult struggle. Be patient, don’t hurry. Don’t lose hope. Awareness is not the end. It creates the beginning of a long struggle...¹⁹

Moving forward, it is important to reiterate that while there is great potential in the practice of developing adult education programs in women-led civil society organizations, these spaces are neither static, nor removed from the social, political and cultural norms that control women’s participation in both private and public spheres. Moreover, while institutions such as the state, the labor force and even education, may change in ways that indicate progress toward gender equality, as participants in this study repeatedly noted, these institutions also have the potential to regress in ways that obstruct, or even erase that progress. Future studies must continue to examine the interactions between institutions of the state, the labor market, education and civil society as well as the effects of those interactions on the promotion, development and the struggle for women’s adult education.

¹⁹ Interview March 14, 2015, translated by author, emphasis added.
## Appendix A: Student Enrollment in Formal Education, 1997-2015

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<th>Educational Year</th>
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<th>Secondary Education</th>
<th>Higher Education</th>
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<table>
<thead>
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<td>Female</td>
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### Appendix B: Enrollment in Non-formal Education by Institution Type and Sex, 2012-2013

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</tbody>
</table>

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Amerika Birleşik Devletlerindeki UCLA'nın Eğitim Bölümünde doktora öğrencisi olarak okuyan Ryan Joann Donaghy bir araştırma projesi yapıyor.


90 0535 687 9678 veya e-postayla ryan.j.donaghy@gmail.com veya 01-310-825-1791 or at omwami@gseis.ucla.edu onun danışımcı, Dr. Edith Omwami ile ilişkili kurabilirsiniz. Bu araştırmacı sizin kaygınızı halledemeyecektir, aşağıdaki ofis ile ilişkili kurabilirsiniz. UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP): Telefon Numarası 01 (310) 825-7122 veya isterseniz, yazabilirsiniz: UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program 11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694 Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694.

Kayıtlarınızı için, bu bilgileri kopya vereceksiniz.

Projesinin Katılmcının İmzası

Katılmcının Adı ve Soyadı

Katılmcının İmzası

Tarih

Araştırmacının İmzası

Araştırmacının Adı ve Soyadı

Araştırmacının İmzası

Telefon Numarası

Tarih
Appendix C: Consent Form for Interview (English)

University of California, Los Angeles
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Ryan JoAnn Donaghy from the Graduate School of Education and Information Sciences at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) is conducting a research study.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you have been identified as having an interest in women’s nonformal education programs, in Turkey. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. The purpose of this research is to learn more about the role of your education program in Turkey. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked a series of questions about your role in the education program and activities, curricula and your knowledge and interest in women’s education. The questions will be open-ended and you may answer the questions in a manner that is most comfortable for you. Each interview should take about 45-90 minutes to complete. There are no anticipated risks or benefits to you from participation in this study. Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can identify you will remain confidential. It will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Your responses during the interviews, including demographic data, will be stored on a computer in a locked office. You will only be referred to by a number and I will keep a guide that links your name to your responses in locked storage. Individual responses to interviews will be destroyed following analysis of the data and completion of the study. You may ask questions about the research at any time. Please contact Ryan Donaghy at 905-356-879678 or via e-mail at ryan.j.donaghy@gmail.com or you may contact Dr. Edith Omwami, Faculty Sponsor at 01-310-825-1791 or at omwami@gseis.ucla.edu. If you have any concerns that cannot resolve by contacting the researcher named above, please contact: UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program (OHRPP): at 01 (310) 825-7122 or write to: UCLA Office of the Human Research Protection Program 11000 Kinross Avenue, Suite 211, Box 951694 Los Angeles, CA 90095-1694.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

SIGNATURE OF STUDY PARTICIPANT

Name of Participant

__________________________  ____________________________
Signature of Participant     Date

SIGNATURE OF PERSON OBTAINING CONSENT

Name of Person Obtaining Consent  Contact Number

__________________________  ____________________________
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent  Date
Appendix D: Interview Questions (Turkish)

Nitel Görüşme Soruları

Kişisel Sorular
1. Kendinizi anlatabilir misiniz?
2. Özeçmişiniizi anlatabilir misiniz (Kişisel, eğitsel, ve benzeri)
3. Türkiye'deki kadına yönelik eğitim programlarına nasıl veya ne zaman merak sardınız?
4. Örgütünüzde (veya programınızı) göreviniz nedir? Ne zamandan beri bu görevi yapıyorsunuz?
5. Örgütteki deneyimlerinizi anlatabilir misiniz?
6. Türkiye'de şehrinizde, veya mahallenizde örgütünüzün etkileri nelerdir?

Program ile ilgili Sorular:

Program Ortamı:
7. Örgütünüzü ve eğitim programlarınıuzu anlatabilir misiniz?
8. Örgütünüzün ve eğitim programlarının ortamını antalabilir misiniz?
9. Sızcce, programlarını düzenleyicileri, katılımcıları arasında bir toplumsallık duygusu var mı? Varsa, bu toplumsallık duygusunu temsil eden nitelikleri nedir?
10. Sızcce, programınızı en önemli etkileri hangisi? Bu etkilerin niye en önemli olduğunu antalabilir misiniz?
11. Sızcce, programınızı uygulamasında bir zorlukla göğüs gerdiniz mi (yer, çocuk bakımını, fonlar, değerlendirme ile ilgili)? Bu zorlukların üstesinden geldiniz mi? Nasıl (ve hayır derse, niye)?

Öğretim Programı:
12. Programınızı, hangi konuları, dersleri, becerileri dahil ediyor musunuz?
13. Dahil ettüğiniz konular, dersler, ve beceriler nasıl öğretilir?
14. Genelde, programınız için, seçtiğiniz öğretim görevlileri kimlerdir? Kişileri nasıl seçtiniz?
15. Programınızın müfredatı veya materyalleri nasıl geliştiriyor musunuz?
16. Programınızı geliştirdiğiniz, devedenmeye yönelik zorluklar yaşadınız mı? Anlatabilir misiniz?

Katılımcılar:
17. Eğitim programınız için, katılımcılar nasıl işe alınıyor?
18. Herbir program için, kaç kişi katlabılır? Genelde, programın süresi nedir?
19. Genelde, işe alma süreciyle ilgili zorluklar var mı? Bunları anlatabilir misiniz?
20. Programlarınızı bitirdikten sonra, katılımcıların öğretim görevlileriyle yeniden iletişime geçme olanakları var mı?
21. Programlarınızı bitirdikten sonra, katılımcıların öğretim görevlisi olabilme şansları var mı?
22. Katılımcılar, programınızı bitirdikten sonra, bir sertifika alıyolar mı?
23. Programınızıda, katılımcılar ile öğretim görevlileri arasındaki ilişkileri açılar mı? Bu ilişkiler, zamanla, değişti mi? Değiştiyse, nasıl?

Diğer:
25. Sızcce, Türkiye’de başarılı bir kadına yönelik eğitim programını geliştirmek için, unsurlar nelerdir?
26. Sızcce, Türkiye’de bir kadına yönelik eğitim programının amacını ulaşmayı engelleyen unsurlar nelerdir?
Appendix D: Interview Questions (English)
Questions for Qualitative Interviews

Personal Questions
1. Could you tell me a bit about yourself?
2. What is your background [personal, educational, etc]?
3. When and how did you develop your interest in women’s education in Turkey?
4. What has been your role in [organization]? How long have you been involved in that role?
5. What motivated you to take part in [organization]? Could you tell me about your experience with the organization?
6. What do you believe has been the impact of [organization] on women’s education in Turkey?

Program-Related Questions

Environment:
7. Could you tell me about the organization of [education program]?
8. Could you explain the environment of [organization and education program]?
9. Do you believe there is a sense of community among participants and coordinators? What characteristics represent that sense of community, in your opinion?
10. What do you think has been the biggest impact of your educational program? Can you explain why you believe this has been the biggest impact?
11. Are there any challenges with implementing the programs [location, child care, funding, monitoring]?

Curriculum:
12. What are the main subjects/topics/skills that the programs tend to cover?
13. How are these subjects/topics/skills covered or taught?
14. Who provides/teaches the curriculum for the schools? How are these educators selected?
15. How were the materials for the program developed?
16. Have you experienced any challenges in developing these programs?

Participants:
17. How are participants recruited for the educational programs?
18. How many participants are selected? How long do they stay?
19. Are there any challenges in recruitment?
20. Do opportunities exist for participants and educators to reconnect following programs?
   What are those networks or communication channels?
21. Are there opportunities for participants to become educators/trainers once the program is completed? How does that process work?
22. Do you provide a certificate once the programs are completed?
23. Could you elaborate on the relationship between educators and participants in these programs? Has this changed over time?

Other:
24. How is your education program funded? Are there any challenges associated with funding the programs currently?
25. In your opinion, what do you believe are the factors/elements that make these programs successful?
26. In your opinion, what do you believe are the factors/elements that make achieving programmatic goals challenging?
Appendix E: Interview Request Letter (Turkish)

University of California, Los Angeles
Karşılaştırmalı Eğitim Bölümü
Los Angeles, California Amerika Birleşik Devletleri

Tarih

Sayın [Yetkili],


Doktora tezim için Türkiye’deki kadınlara ve kızlara yönelik okul dışı ve yaygın eğitim programları ile ilgilenip görüşmeler yapıyoruz. Kadınlara yönelik okul dışı ve yaygın eğitim programları yaptığınız dolayısıyla örgütünüz, bu proje için potansiyel katılımcı olarak seçilmektedir.


Eğer zamanınız olur ve bir gün sizinle konuşabilirsem çok sevinirim. Telefonla veya e-postayla benimle iletişime geçebilirsiniz. Bu projesi ile ilgili sorularınızı herzaman sorup iletişim kurabileceğiniz adresler:

CepTelefonu: [X]  
E-posta: [X]  

Bu e-postayı okuduğunuz için teşekkür ederim.

Saygılarla,
Ryan J. Donaghy
Appendix E: Interview Request Letter (English)

University of California, Los Angeles
Department of Social Sciences and Comparative Education
Los Angeles, California United States of America

Date

Dear [Name],

My name is Ryan Donaghy. I am currently a doctoral student in the department of Comparative Education at the University of California, Los Angeles. I am writing this e-mail to invite you to participate in a new education project.

For my doctoral dissertation, I am interested in and conducting interviews on the topic of women and girl's non-formal education programs. Because your organization works on women’s non-formal education projects, you have been selected as a potential participant in this project.

The goal of this project is to learn about the development of women’s non-formal education projects in Turkey and, from your perspective, the effects or impacts of these programs. If you agree to participate in this project, you will be asked to answer a set of questions related to your role in women’s non-formal education projects. Answering these questions during the interview will take approximately 45-90 minutes. The interview will be comprised of open-ended questions. I truly hope that you will be interested in participating in this project and will want to share your experiences.

I would truly appreciate it if you have the time and are willing to speak with me. You may contact me regarding your interest either by telephone or by e-mail. At any time, please feel free to contact me regarding any questions related to the project:
Cell Phone: [X]
E-mail: [X]

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this letter.

Best,
Ryan J. Donaghy

1. National Monitoring and Coordination Committee for Women’s Employment will be established in order to determine the current problems about women’s employment and monitor all the works conducted by all related parties while enabling the coordination and collaboration between them.

2. A deputy undersecretary will be assigned to each Ministry in order to monitor the implementation of the laws, regulations, and arrangements about the equal opportunity regarding the women’s employment in public sector. Also a department will be charged with the tasks about the equality of women and men in every Ministry.

3. In every public and private sector inspection, an assessment about whether the regulations the Labour Law No.4857 set out was put into practice or not will be included in the inspection report.

4. State institutions and organizations and local administrations will include gender perspective in their strategic plans, activity reports, and performance programs. Statistical data, scientific researches, and the necessary budget for these will be included in these texts.

5. State institutions will make equal opportunity impact assessment and present it in the appendix while preparing the legislative drafts.

6. In state institutions and organizations during the processes of job examinations, attendance to in-service trainings, promotion to senior management positions, the principle of equality of opportunity for women and men will be followed and discrimination against women will not be allowed.

7. All state institutions and organizations will include the issue of “equality of opportunity for women and men” into their in-service training programs.

8. The Provincial Employment and Vocational Education Boards will promote equality of opportunity for women and men; and a representative from one of the NGOs working on “women” will participate in these boards.

9. The Provincial Employment and Vocational Education Boards will focus on the vocational trainings for leading sectors regarding women’s employment. In every January reports concerning the activities and outcomes will be sent to the National Monitoring and Coordination Committee for Women’s Employment.

10. All the formal education activities and vocational training programs conducted by Public Education Centers, Community Centers, Directorate-General of the Turkish Employment Agency, and local administrations will be planned with the collaboration of NGOs and will include topics

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concerning women’s human rights, training and employment options, counseling and guiding during job-seeking.

11. Projects about the social participation of women who were subjected to violence and stay in women shelters, women who are in prison and will be released in less than a year, women whose husbands were died and divorced women will be given priority.

12. Statistics concerning the work life will be collected and made in gender basis. Also extra statistics will be collected and researches will be conducted about home-based working women.

13. Child care and day care center obligation for the public and private work- places that was set out by the Labour Law numbered 4875 will be fulfilled and in- spected.
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