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Determining the Levels of Participation of Women Living in Rural Areas in Training Activities on Women's Rights: Case of Turkey

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ABSTRACT The objective of this study is to reveal the social structures of women living in the province of Gumushane and to determine their social position and relations. Furthermore, to determine whether or not they are aware of their legal rights, as well as their state of receiving training on their rights and the effective factors upon their training. The data used in the study was obtained from questionnaires that were applied to 172 women. The raw data obtained from the study were used in the basic descriptive analyses and in the LIMDEP software program, for estimating the probit model. It was determined that women had very low levels of education, 61.0 percent of them did not know where to apply to, in case of domestic violence, they were not supported by their families regarding marital conflicts, and 72.1 percent never considered divorce. According to the regression analysis, the employed women who considered divorce and knew where to apply to regarding this issue had previously received training on women's rights.

INTRODUCTION

Turkey has an exceptional and unique historical experience about women's rights in the world. The reflections of this historical experience, could be observed in all decisions taken, regarding the progress and strengthening of women in all policies executed. The reforms that were made within the first 10 years, following the foundation of the Turkish Republic in the year 1923, and the enactment of Civil Code in 1926, have provided not only the acquisition of citizenship rights for women, but also the reconstruction of the Turkish society, which has resulted in a great social change (MFSP 2015).

According to the data of 2014, 49.8 percent of the total population in Turkey, which is about 77, 695, 904 people, consist of female population (TSI 2015). Participation of women, which comprise a great majority of the available labour force for agricultural activities in rural areas, is evaluated as an additional labour force for men and considered an extension of the housework of women. Indeed, rural women not only participate in agriculture as a family labour force, waged agricultural labourers and business managers, but also make an economic contribution to their families through non-agricultural activities. Rural women may have to participate in agricultural activities as managers, when their husbands die or they get out of their villages to work. Although, rural women have an important place in the total employment, they do not get the retribution they deserve (Uzmay and Karaturhan 2015). Furthermore, even though the women in Turkey are considerably involved in the total employment, they have a lower rate of participation in employment, as they work in unrecorded jobs (Gumus 2010). Women in Turkey started being involved in the labour market in real terms after 1950, especially as a result of the urbanization caused by the migration from the rural areas to urban areas (Berber and Eser 2008: Kilinc 2015). It is obvious that the women employment is important in terms of community development (Morvaridiki 1992). However, the women employment is not satisfactory due to the present social structure and the policies being executed (Karabiyik 2012). In Turkey, the rate of women partic-

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ipation in labour force and their share in the general employment is very low, compared to the OECD and EU countries. The rate of women participation in labour force decreased from 32 percent to 25 percent between 1980 and 2008. The rate of women participation in labour force in Turkey was determined as 28.9 percent in 2011, which was the lowest among the OECD countries (Anonymous 2012). According to the data of 2015, it is known that women have a share of 27.1 percent among those being employed and this share has reached 47.0 percent among those working in the agricultural sector and 23.5 percent among those working in the manufacturing industry (TSI 2015). According to the economic activity branches, women are observed to be intensely employed in the service sector in developed countries and in the agricultural sector in less developed countries (Berber and Eser 2008; Peker and Kubar 2012). As a result of their study, Singh et al. (1999) determined that the rate of women labour force to the total labour force was 23 percent in agriculturally developed region, and 32 percent in agriculturally underdeveloped regions (Singh et al. 1999). In Turkey, the literacy rate of women within the total employment is lower, compared to men in almost every country, and this condition is even worse in less developed countries. Women's lower rate of participation in business life in every level of society due to their social and economic conditions prevent them from adopting new social values (Golbasi 1998). Comparing the educational level of female population, who have an important share within the total employment, with that of the male population; it is observed that 1.9 percent of men and 9.4 percent of women are illiterates (TSI 2014). 77 percent of illiterate women are aged 50 years and above and there are 81.442 illiterate women within the age group of 6-24 years (MFSP 2015). A number of regional workshops have been organized in Turkey for several years, aimed at revealing the problems of rural women and determining the solution possibilities. Involving the study region as well, the workshop of Black Sea Region emphasized that the most important problem of women was education. The rural families with low economic conditions in the region did not allow their daughters go to school, especially after the compulsory education, which brought about the problem of women in this region to stay away from business life in the coming years (MFAL 2012).

The inclusion of women in the social and business life, although, at lower rates compared to men, has resulted in the increase of studies aimed at the social status and legal rights of women. In this context, this study is thought to be important in terms of determining the position and relations of women, living in the countryside of the province of Gümüshane, within the social life and whether or not they are aware of their legal rights, as well as specifying the effective factors, upon receiving training on their rights.

METHODOLOGY

The data of the study were obtained as a result of a questionnaire applied to 172 women living in the 15 villages of Gumushane. In order to perform the required evaluations and make calculations as well as determine the general characteristics, rights and social position of individuals who participated in the questionnaire, the raw data obtained from the questionnaire were transferred to the SPSS software package and the results are illustrated in Tables 1 and 2 using the "crosstable" method. Furthermore, the data that were used in the paper as a dependent variable in order to determine the effective factors upon receiving training on women's rights were used in estimating the probit model in the LIMDEP software package. Table 3 illustrates the result of the analysis. The functional form of the model to be acquired from the analysis is as follows.

PTWR = f (AGE, EDU, MS, CD, WC, ND)

Here

PTWR*: State of having previously participated in training on women's rights*

AGE *: Woman's age*

EDU *: Educational status*

MS *: Marital status*

CD *: Considering divorce*

WC *: Working condition*

ND *: Receiving a negative discrimination in business life*

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the paper, as a result of the questionnaire applied to 172 women living in the rural areas of Gumushane, an analysis regarding the personal characteristics of women in the region and their thoughts about marriage were conducted, and

the profiles of women regarding their social conditions were presented.

Table 1 shows the characteristics of women, comprising the target group within the scope of the study, as well as their state of receiving training on women's rights. Accordingly, the most remarkable characteristics of women in the paper were determined as follows. While 79.1 percent of women that received the application of questionnaire were older than 31; considering their educational status, 72.1 percent of women were primary school graduates, 8.7 percent were high school graduates and only 1.2 percent were university graduates. In the study, it was discovered that the employment rates of women in Turkey are quite low, compared to the EU countries (Dedeoglu 2009; ASPB 2014). An increase in rural women's educational level will change

Table 1: Personal characteristics of women and their state of receiving training on women's rights

Personal characteristics		*State of receiving training on women's rights (%)*		
		Not received	*Received*	*Total*
Do You Work?	**No**	67.2	25.2	**92.4**
	Yes	4.3	3.3	7.6
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Marital Status?	Single	3.5	1.7	5.3
	Married	68.0	26.7	**94.7**
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
If You Are Married, Did You Find Your Partner Yourself?	**No**	46.5	16.3	**62.8**
	Yes	25.0	12.2	37.2
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Did You Get Married Willingly?	No	4.1	0.0	4.1
	Yes	67.4	28.5	**95.9**
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Your Age of Marriage	**12-20**	59.3	25.0	**84.3**
	21-30	11.6	2.9	14.5
	31<	0.6	0.6	1.2
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Age of Your Husband	18-25	0.6	0.0	0.6
	26-30	4.1	0.6	4.6
	31<	66.9	27.9	**94.8**
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Educational Status of Your Husband	Illiterate	1.2	0.0	1.2
	Literate	4.1	0.0	4.1
	Primary School	47.7	21.5	**69.2**
	High School	15.1	6.4	21.4
	Associate Degree	1.2	0.0	1.2
	Undergraduate	2.3	0.6	2.9
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Occupation of Your Husband	Unemployed	0.0	0.6	0.6
	Teacher	12.8	11.0	23.8
	Craftsman	**38.4**	10.5	**48.8**
	Civil Servant	10.5	3.5	14.0
	Retired	9.9	2.9	12.8
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Number of Children	N/A	0.6	0.0	0.6
	1	7.0	2.3	9.3
	2	10.5	5.2	15.7
	3	34.9	12.2	**47.1**
	3<	18.6	8.7	27.3
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Number of Members in the Family	**1-5**	**59.3**	28.5	**87.8**
	6-10	12.2	0.0	12.2
	11<	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Family Structure	**Nuclear Family**	61.6	27.9	**87.8**
	Extended Family	9.9	0.6	12.2
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0

their status in society and enable them to be more involved in business life (Prakash 2003; Sahinli and Sahbaz 2013).

It was determined that 71.5 percent of women who participated or filled out the questionnaire had not previously participated in the trainings on women's rights, 92.4 percent are not working, 62.8 percent had an arranged marriage, had a very early marriage (at ages of 12-20 years), and had married men older than 31 years. A study revealed that 38.7 percent of people aged 18-24 found their partners themselves, but the older ones got married by the decision of their families (TSI 2006). It was determined that a great majority of women in the paper field were married to craftsmen, which was followed by teachers. Comparing the results with the mean in Turkey, the numbers (results) are observed to be close to each other in certain subjects. Based on the data of Turkey in the year 2015, it was determined that the average marriage age of women was 23.6, men were older than women in 74.9 percent of married couples, 39.6 percent of women had decided to get married willingly and with the approval of their families, and 9.4 percent of women in Turkey were illiterates (TSI 2015).

Table 2 illustrates women's role in marriage, as well as their thoughts about their rights and social position. Accordingly, while determining the profiles of women who participated in the questionnaire; it was emphasised that they considerably had no fear of their husbands, polygamy in their families were at the rate of 14 percent, were not exposed to violence in their families, but do not know where to apply to in case of violence, never considered divorce, believed that women were pushed into the background in business life, but it was not possible in social life, made a demand to public institutions in order to increase their knowledge of this subject, had previously participated in trainings on women's rights (28 percent), but they did not have sufficient information about inheritance, had normal relations with their husbands, wanted to complete their education and feel safer by means of a profession, and expecting a greater level of understanding from their husbands. According to the data of the year 2015, it was determined that 76.8 percent of women in Turkey were satisfied with their marriage. Additionally, it was emphasized that educated women were involved in labour force at the rate of 30.8 percent (TSI 2015).

Table 2: Women's role in marriage, as well as their thoughts about their rights and social position

Characteristics		*State of receiving training on women's rights (%)*		
		Not received	*Received*	*Total*
Are you afraid of your husband?	Yes	4.7	3.5	8.1
	No	66.9	25.0	**91.9**
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Polygamy in family	Yes	7.6	6.4	14.0
	No	64.0	22.1	**86.0**
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Are you exposed to violence by your husband?	Yes	18.0	1.8	19.8
	No	53.5	26.7	**80.2**
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Do you know where to apply to in case of violence?	Yes	5.8	4.1	9.9
	No	49.4	11.6	**61.0**
	No idea	16.3	12.8	29.1
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
How often do you consider divorce?	Always	0.0	0.0	0
	When I am exposed to violence	15.1	3.5	18.6
	No idea			
	Rarely	0.0	0.6	0.6
	Never	5.2	3.5	8.7
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Thoughts about women discrimination in business life	Yes	32.0	5.2	37.2
	No	10.5	6.4	16.9
	No idea	29.0	16.9	45.9
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Thoughts about women discrimination in social life	Yes	14.5	9.9	24.4
	No	**47.1**	**17.4**	**64.5**
	No idea	9.9	1.2	11.1
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0

Table 2: Contd...

Characteristics		*State of receiving training on women's rights (%)*		
		Not received	*Received*	*Total*
Thoughts about demands from public institutions regarding women's rights	**Yes**	**62.2**	14.0	**76.2**
	No	8.7	2.9	11.6
	No idea	0.6	11.6	12.2
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Having information about inheritance	Yes	29.1	9.9	39.0
	No	42.4	18.6	**61.0**
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Do you receive support from your family regarding your problems in your relationship?	Yes	24.4	5.2	29.7
	No	**47.1**	**23.3**	**70.3**
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Evaluating the personal position in society compared to others	Not good	0.6	0.0	0.6
	Normal	14.0	4.9	18.9
	Good	23.2	6.2	**29.4**
	Very good	26.7	8.1	34.8
	Don't know	7.0	9.3	16.3
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
At what position do you imagine yourself?	**A literate person**	42.4	18.6	**61.0**
	A person with a few children	29.1	9.9	39.0
	As a wealthy person			
	Other	0.0	0.0	0
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
Do you think women should work also outside of home?	**Absolutely yes**	50.0	26.2	**76.2**
	Maybe	21.5	2.3	23.8
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
What is the most important reason making you feel a safe future?	Marriage	29.9	8.8	38.7
	Having a profession	32.2	73	39.5
	Wealth	9.2	12.3	21.5
	Having a child	0.2	0.1	0.3
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
How do you evaluate your relationship with your husband?	Not good	20.9	7.6	28.5
	Normal	31.4	8.7	40.1
	Good	9.9	5.2	15.1
	Very good	9.3	6.4	15.7
	Don't know	0.0	0.6	0.6
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0
How do you want your husband to treat you?	More patient	8.1	3.5	11.6
	More indulgent	32.0	11.6	43.6
	More helpful	17.4	5.8	23.3
	More affectionate	14.0	6.4	20.3
	Other	0.0	1.2	1.2
	Total	71.5	28.5	100.0

Table 3 shows the probit regression analysis, the dependent variable was taken as the state of being previously trained on women's rights. This dependent variable shown in Table 3 was explained using six independent variables. There was a positive, but insignificant correlation between the age and educational status of women as well as their state of receiving training on women's rights. There was a negative, but significant correlation between the marital status and the state of receiving training, on women's rights. Single women were observed to be eagerly waiting to receive training. Similarly, there was a positively significant correlation between the women considering divorce and the working women, and the state of receiving previous training.

Table 3: Analysis results of the probit model regarding the effective factors upon the state of receiving previous training on women's rights

Variables	*Coefficient*	*Standard error*	*P value*
Constant	-0.606	0.874	0.488
Age	0.121	0.199	0.543
Educational status	0.064	0.176	0.714
Marital status	-0.531	0.291	0.068*
Considering divorce	1.082	0.265	0.000***
Working condition	0.227	0.094	0.016**
Negative discrimination in business life	0.036	0.140	0.794
Log likelihood: -85.530	McFadden R Square:0.168		÷²(6): 34.482***

*** P<0.01, ** P<0.05, * P<0.

CONCLUSION

In the paper, it was determined that majority of women completing the questionnaire were primary school graduates and almost all of them were housewives. Among the working women, those considering divorce had higher rates. The result of the regression analysis also showed that women considering divorce and the employed women, have previously received training on women's rights. 77.3 percent of women stated that, they had to be involved in business life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Turkey has made remarkable progress regarding women's rights. However, the women in the region have insufficient knowledge about their own rights, as the patriarchal structure still dominates the study area, women have lower educational levels and they are not included in business life.

In Turkey, where the rate of women participation in business life is low, the study which aimed at increasing the educational levels of women will enable them to be involved in business life at a greater rate and become aware or conscious of the fact that they occupy an important place in marriage.

There are apparently problems in the implementation of laws on women's rights. It is a significant fact, considering that it is very important to also raise awareness in men as well as women, in order to implement the laws in the region.

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