TÜRKİYE'DE KIRSAL BÖLGEDE YAŞAYAN KADINLARIN DEMOGRAFİK ÖZELLİKLERİ, AİLE İÇİNDEKİ STATÜLERİ VE GELECEK BEKLENTİLERİ : BALIKESİR KAYSERİ VE KAHRAMANMARAŞ İLLERİ ÖRNEĞİ

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ÖZET

Bu çalışma Türkiye'nin üç farklı ilinde yaşayan köylü kadınların demografik özelliklerini, aile içindeki konumlarını ve gelecek beklentilerini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Katılımcılar; Cochran'ın kategori tipi veri toplama anketleri için kullanılan örnekleme formülü kullanılarak, % 5 hata sınırı ve % 00.5 olasılık düzeyi kabul edilerek belirlenmiştir. Çalışma, takip eden konulara yönelmiştir: Köylü kadınların statüsü nedir? Kırsal bölgede yaşayan kadınlar tarım dışında çeşitli iş fırsatlarını bulmak için hangi tür becerilere sahiptir? Araştırılan bölgelerin sosyo-ekonomik ve sosyo-kültürel yapısına göre kırsal bölgede yaşayan kadınların umudu nedir? Cinsiyet ayrımcılığı, eğitim, beceri kazanma, tarım dışı iş, kırsal bölgede yaşayan kadınların gelecek yönelimli hedefleri ve umutlarının gerçekleşmesini nasıl etkilemektedir? Çalışmanın bulguları ile kırsal sosyologlar, aile planlamacıları, tarımsal yayım eğitimcileri ve araştırmacılar için faydalı bilgiler sağlaması amaçlanmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kırsal bölge kadınlarının statüsü, Yayım eğitiminin rolü, Kadınların Çalışması, Türkiye

ABSTRACT

Demographics, Status In The Family, And Future Expectations Of Rural Women In Turkey: A Case Study Of Balikesir, Kayseri And Kahramanmaras

This study aims to investigate demographic characteristics, status in the family, and future expectations of rural women in three different regions of Turkey. The participants of the study were determined using the Cochran's sample size determination formula, based on the data collection using a categorical instrument with an acceptable margin of error of 5%, and 0.05 level of probability. The study was to address the following issues: What is the status of rural women? What kind of skills rural women possess to find employment opportunities other than farming? What is the hope of rural woman within the socioeconomic and socio-cultural structure in the research area? How gender discrimination influences the education, skill gaining, and non-farm employment, as well as, the realization of future oriented goals and hopes of rural women? The findings of this study were aimed to provide useful material for rural sociologists, family planners, extension educators, and researchers.

Keywords: Status of Rural Women, Role of Extension Education, Women's Work, Turkey

1. INTRODUCTION

Rural women in developing countries have less opportunities of education, employment in non-farm occupations, and self-determination status as compared to developed countries. Low level education or illiteracy among rural woman influence their family nutrition, health care, family planning, and social development in rural areas. Studies show that women who have education beyond elementary school have fewer children than those with elementary school graduates or illiterate woman, indicating that education among rural women assists family planning and reduce the rate of high level of population growth in the

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rural areas of developing countries. Education also makes it possible for rural women to increase their knowledge, ability, and skills, which enable them to seek employment opportunities other than agricultural facilities (Sathar, *et al.* 2003; Yildirak, *et al*. 2003; Kocak, 1999; World Bank, 1993). Non-farm employment opportunities in rural areas reduce the burden and pressure on agricultural land, which have been subject to division and fragmentation for years. Therefore, education in rural women makes significant contributions both to the development of farming and non-farm occupations.

As Ozcatalbas and Ozkan (2003:114) state that "A great deal of discussion has taken place on women's role in development and the benefit of opportunities that may come from this. Such processes have occurred differently in different countries because of their varying characteristics. Understandably, Turkey has also experienced development but this has varied across different sectors within the country. Research studies show that women, compared to men, benefit less from the fruits of development. This is particularly clear among developing countries where indicators relating to women are very poor. This disparity is increasing, causing further disadvantages to rural women in particular" However, the benefits women utilize from development and the status of women may not be identical even within a single country. Since the level of economic development, socioeconomic and socio-cultural characteristics, ethnicity, religion and many other factors may vary within a country, the demographic characteristics, the status, and expectations among women may also vary (Koray, 1993).

The United Nation (UN)'s Human Development Index (HDI) measures the achievements of countries considering (1) a long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth; (2) knowledge, as measured by the adult literacy rate (with two-thirds weight) and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (with one-third weight); and (3) a decent standard of living as measured GDP per capita (UNDP, 2005). The 2004 HDI report showed that Turkey ranked 88th among 177 nations with a 70.4 years of life expectancy at birth; 86.5% adult literacy rate; 68% combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary, and tertiary schools; $6,390 GDP per capita; 0.76 life expectancy index; 0.80 education index; 0.69 GDP index; and 0.751 HDI (UNDP, 2005). In the same report gender inequalities in education, economic activities, and political participation were also illustrated. According to the gender-related development index (GDI) Turkey ranked 96th among 177 nations with a 72.8 years of female life expectancy at birth; 77.2 % female adult literacy rate; 54 % combined gross enrolment ratio for primary, secondary, and tertiary schools; $3,717 female estimated earned income; 50.3 % female activity rate; 65 % female contributing family workers and 72 % female employment in agriculture (UNDP, 2005).

A major strategy for overcoming the gender inequalities, particularly in rural areas of developing countries is extension education services. Extension education is defined as "a two-way communication between client and source; it is a process involving the communication of information from the source to clients who then appropriately apply the information and communicate the results back to the source. It is interactive and problem solving programming" (Blackburn and Vist, 1984: 1) From the United States experiences, the priority missions of extension service were "provide assistance to families, youth and community leaders in the development of rural America to make it a better place in which to work and live; provide assistance to adults and youth through programs in agriculture and home economics to increase efficiency in production, marketing and utilization of food and fiber (including forest products) to meet both domestic and worldwide needs; work with producers and their families to strengthen independent family-owned farming operations to assure a strong competitive agriculture based on the independent farm; and to assist both private and public sector with protection and management of rural America's natural resources for use by present and future generations" (Kirby, 1976). Although Kirby's four missions of extension service were developed for the United States three decades ago, they should still be the missions of extension services for many developing countries.

Extension system in Turkey includes public extension, private extension, and university extension (Talug, 1993). Public extension consisted of general extension services provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA), development projects with extension component, commodity based extension, subject-based extension, public media, and extension by universities and research institutes. Private extension includes input suppliers, commodity buyers, private consultants, private media, nongovernmental organizations, and farmer organizations. University extension includes graduates, research continuing training and outreach activities (Talug, 1993). Although extension system in Turkey includes many

different organizations, MARA is the largest public organization primarily responsible for promoting agricultural innovations; educating farmers, rural women, and rural youth through various informal extension programs. It has directorates in every province and districts with thousands of professional employees who can easily reach to the clientele, especially the hard to reach.

The first attempt of providing extension service for rural women in Turkey was in 1990 within the framework of the second Agricultural Extension and Research and Application Project (TYUAP in Turkish), which was implemented by MARA. The TYUAP project provided rural women with education in home economics, family and child nutrition, and handcrafts (Ozcatalbas, 1995). This was the first time Turkey's rural women were introduced with informal education related to non-farming activities. After this year the projects aiming to provide education for rural women were extended through the country. Besides domestic funding of the projects, low rate interest loans from international organizations were also provided. Some examples of the projects are: "Modern Agricultural Production Techniques Project" (1990) was implemented with 90 women in Antalya, Denizli, Konya, Sanlıurfa, Van, and Rize Provinces. "Pilot Women Farmers Agricultural Extension Project" (1992) was aimed to provide training for rural women in vegetable production, greenhouse production, animal husbandry, horticulture, and viticulture. "Vocational Training for Women and Integration to Rural Cooperatives Project" (1993) was aimed to provide training for 7974 rural women in farming and other than farm activities. Examples of these projects have increased over time.

In order to develop extension programs for rural women, first their demographic variables, their status, and expectations should scientifically be determined. Although there have been programs concerning with various strategies for eliminating the disadvantages of rural women, there is a lack of research findings to assist for the development of program objectives. Therefore, primary purpose of this study was to investigate the demographics, status in the family, and future expectations of rural women in Kahramanmaras, Balikesir, and Kayseri Provinces of Turkey. The specific objectives are:

(a) to describe demographic characteristics of rural women in the study area;
(b) to determine the status of rural woman in the family;
(c) to describe the expectations of rural women for their future;
(d) to find if significant differences existed among the three research areas in terms of selected demographic characteristics;
(e) to find if significant differences existed among the three research region in terms of the status of rural women in the family;
(f) to find if significant differences existed among the three research areas in terms of future expectations of women.

The findings of this study are intended to provide useful material for rural sociologists, family planners, extension educators, researchers and policy makers.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The target population for this study is defined as women living in the rural areas of Bandirma District of Balikesir Province, Central District of Kayseri Province, and Central District and Andirin District of Kahramanmaras Province, Turkey. Balikesir Province is located in the Marmara Region of Turkey while Kayseri Province is located in the Central Anatolia Region, and Kahramanmaras Province is located in the Eastern Mediterranean Region of Turkey. The selection purposes of these provinces were their representation of three different parts of Turkey and also the ease of data collection in the rural areas of these provinces. The minimum required sample size was determined using Cochran's sample size determination formula. It was calculated as 384 based on the data collected using a categorical instrument with an acceptable margin of error of 5% and an alpha level of 0.05. Since an accurate frame of the target population was not available for the researchers, the small population correction formula was not used to adjust the calculated sample size. Sample size was calculated as follows (Cochran, 1977):

$N_0 = t^2 (p) (q) / d^2$

$N_0 = (1.96)^2 (.5) (.5) / (.05)^2$

$N_0 = (3.8416) (.25) / (.0025)$

$N_0 = .96 / .0025$

$N_0 = 384$

Since the research was intended to be carried out in three different provinces, the required sample size of 384 was divided by 3 resulting 128 respondents in every province. However, this didn't come through due to lack of time and availability of female graduate student to be sent to rural areas for data collection. Therefore, the survey was conducted with 238 respondents who were approximately 62% of the originally calculated sample size. The distribution of this number among the provinces, in a descending order, was 85 respondents (36%) from Kayseri Province, 83 respondents (35%) from Kahramanmaras Province, and 70 respondents (29%) from Balikesir Province.

The data collection instrument used in the study was developed by considering earlier studies conducted with similar purposes. It consisted of three major sections. The first section sought information about the demographic characteristics of rural women in the variables of age, education, marital status, and occupation. The second section elicited information about the status of woman in the rural family in the variables of marital age, number of marriages, type of marriage, availability of official wedding, number of births given, ideal number of children a family should have, attitudes toward birth control, birth control methods, relativity with husband, availability of social security, people assisting in housework, use of leisure time, and husband's occupation. The third section of the instrument sought information about the future goals of rural women in the variables of the most desired occupation, the most favourable place of residence, the most favourable occupation for husband, whether or not unemployed women continue their marriage if they were economically independent, the most favourable occupations for children, intention to sent children to school after elementary school, whether or not husband give permission in case of finding a permanent job, and what should be done to increase employment opportunities for rural women.

Technically, all the items in the instrument were developed in categories, so it would be easier for the respondents to select the most relevant choice. Validity of the instrument was established through a review by three professors at Kahramanmaras Sutcu Imam University, and a professor at Balikesir University. Reliability of the instrument was assessed in June 2005 by conducting a field test with 14 rural women in Kahramanmaras Province. After this test, slide changes were made in the questions, which were difficult to understand by the respondents. Data were collected in July 2005.

Descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages were used to accomplish the first three objective of the study. Chi square test for independence procedure was used to accomplish the remaining three objectives of the study. Literature on the subject as well as the observations and experiences of the researchers in the field were used to develop ideas and recommendations. SPSS Version 11.5 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used for quantitative data analyses of this study.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Research findings are presented by following the objective order of this study. The first objective was to identify demographic characteristics of rural women in the study area, and from the data collected Table 1 was prepared. From the table, 48% of the respondents were 35 or less years of age while 24% were age 50 or older. The average age of respondents was calculated as 38.61 (SD = 15.68). In terms of education, 12% of the respondents were illiterate. A large portion of the respondents (43%) held an elementary school degree while only 4% had university education. A majority of respondents (74%) were

married when considered by their marital status while the rest of them were 15% single, 8% widowed, and 4% divorced, respectively. Finally, in terms of occupation, a majority of the respondents (66%) were housewives, and this was followed by working in own farm (19%), and working in other farms (15%).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Rural Women

Demographic Characteristics	Number	%
Age		
≤ 35	115	48.3
36 – 50	67	28.2
≥ 50	56	23.5
TOTAL		
Education		
Illiterate	28	11.8
Some elementary school	25	10.5
Elementary school	102	42.9
Secondary school	30	12.6
High school	44	18.5
University	9	3.8
TOTAL	238	100.0
Marital Status		
Married	175	73.5
Single	35	14.7
Divorced	8	3.4
Widow	20	8.4
TOTAL	238	100.0
Occupation		
Housewife	158	66.4
Farming (own farm)	45	18.9
Farm worker (daily worker)	35	14.7
TOTAL	238	100.0

The second objective of the study was to determine the status of rural woman in the family. Table 2 was prepared to accomplish this objective. From the table, the majority of respondents (68%) got married in the age between 16 and 20. The average marital age was calculated as 18.67 (SD = 3.33). Ninety-seven percent had only one marriage, 53% had arranged marriages, 70% had their official wedding with their marriage. Number of birth given changed from 1 to 6 or more while the largest portion of this item was 2 births (26%). The average birth number in the research area was calculated as 3.69 (SD = 2.29). Sixty-eight percent of respondents assumed that one child only is the ideal number of children for a rural family. Ninety-three percent are pro-family planning but 40% never used any birth control methods. Thirty-six percent have no social security while the remaining parts have social security from own or from husband and/or from father. Seventy-six percent have no contribution for their family budgets and those who provide 75% or more of their family budgets are only 1.3%. Children, husband, mother in law, and neighbours, in a descending order, are the individuals who help respondents with their housework. A large variety of leisure time activities from meeting with neighbours to watching television occurred among the respondents. Thirty-six percent of the husbands were farmers while the remaining parts were workers (24%), officers (16%), other rural workers (12%), and traders 10%). A majority of respondents (51%) make their family decisions together with their husbands.

Table 2. Status of Rural Woman in the Family

Status Related Variables	Number	%
Marital Age		
≤ 15	28	13.8
16 – 20	137	67.5
21 – 25	25	12.3
≥ 25	13	6.4
TOTAL	203	100.0
Number of marriages		
One	197	97.0
Two	6	3.0
TOTAL	203	100.0
Type of Marriage		
Arranged marriage	107	52.7

Running away with husband	42	20.7
After meeting a couple of times	36	17.7
After Introduced by a relatives	18	8.9
TOTAL	203	100.0
Time of official wedding		
With marriage	141	69.5
One year after marriage	21	10.3
Two years after marriage	15	7.4
Three to ten years after marriage	17	8.4
Not available yet	9	4.4
TOTAL	203	100.0
Number of births given		
None	11	5.4
1	33	16.3
2	52	25.6
3	42	20.7
4	30	14.8
5	17	8.4
6 or more	18	8.8
TOTAL	203	100.0
Ideal number of children		
1	146	67.6
2	60	27.8
3 or more	10	4.7
TOTAL	216	100.0
Attitudes towards family planning		
Against family planning	16	6.7
Supports family planning	222	93.3
TOTAL	238	100.0
Methods of Contraception		
Never use any contraception method	82	40.0
Husband use contraception methods	42	20.5
Day counting	10	4.9
Spiral	37	18.0
Pills etc	29	14.1
Other undefined methods	5	2.4
TOTAL	205	100.0
Type of social security		
Social Security Institution (own)	26	10.9
State Retirement Fund (From husband or from father)	20	8.4
Social Security Institution (From husband or from father)	45	18.9
Bag-Kur (Social Security Institution for Self Employed) (From husband or from father)	46	19.3
Green card	15	6.3
No social security	86	36.1
TOTAL	238	100.0
Contribution to family budget		
None	171	76.0
Les than 25%	29	12.4
25-50%	18	7.6
51- 75%	4	1.7
More than 75%	3	1.3
TOTAL	225	100.0
People helping with housework		
Husband	48	27.9
Children	82	47.7
Mother in law	29	16.9
Neighbours	13	7.6
TOTAL	172	100.0
Use of leisure time		
Meeting with neighbours	44	19.3
Knitting	73	32.0
Housework	22	9.6
Staying with children	26	11.4
Reading books	20	8.8
Listening music	22	9.6
Watching television	17	7.5
Have no leisure time	4	1.8
TOTAL	228	100.0
Husband's occupation		
Farmer	73	36.1

Trader	21	10.4
Officer	33	16.3
Worker	49	24.3
Other rural works	26	12.9
TOTAL	202	100.0
Who makes the decisions in the family		
Myself	29	14.1
Husband	50	24.4
Together	106	51.7
Elders	20	9.8
TOTAL	205	100.0

Objective three of the study was to describe the thoughts of rural women for their future. Table 3 prepared for this purpose. From the table, the most desired two occupations for respondents were officer (34%), and any permanent work (32%). The most favourable place of residence was city (37%) while those who considered village as the most favourable place of residence were 14%. The ideal occupation for husbands changed from officer (30%) to farmer (4%). The ideal occupation for daughters was teacher (43%) and the ideal occupation for sons was doctor (29%). Ninety percent wanted to continue their marriage in case of being economically independent. Ninety-four percent had intention of sending their daughters to school after elementary while 90% had the same intention for their sons. Sixty-percent of the respondents stated that their husbands would give them permission for work if they find a permanent job and 64% believe that a permanent job would higher the status of rural woman. Forty-nine percent believe that education would increase employment opportunities for rural women. A permanent job with $1000 salary was the most desirable occupation among rural women.

Table 3. Thoughts about the Future

Thoughts About the Future Variables	**Number**	**%**
The most desired occupation for woman		
Officer	79	34.1
Any permanent job	75	32.3
Farming	7	3.0
Housewife	38	16.4
Establishing own business	33	14.3
TOTAL	232	100.0
The most favourable place of residence		
Village	33	14.2
Small town	15	6.5
District	29	12.5
City	86	37.1
Metropolis	31	13.4
It does not matter	38	16.4
TOTAL	232	100.0
Ideal husband's occupation		
Farmer	9	4.0
Officer	68	30.5
Teacher	33	14.8
Engineer	15	6.7
Doctor	39	17.5
Businessman	19	8.5
It does not matter	40	17.9
TOTAL	223	100.0
Would you continue your marriage if you were economically independent		
Yes	180	90.0
No	20	10.0
TOTAL	200	100.0
Ideal daughter's occupation		
Teacher	95	43.5
Nurse	38	17.4
Doctor	30	13.7
Officer	23	10.5
Chemists	8	3.6
Engineer	8	3.6
Housewife	6	2.7
Other occupations	11	5.0
TOTAL	219	100.0

Ideal occupation for sons		
Doctor	61	28.6
Teacher	45	21.1
Officer	32	15.0
Police officer	26	12.2
Army officer	24	11.2
Businessman	18	8.7
Other occupations	7	3.2
TOTAL	213	100.0
Intention of sending daughters to school after elementary		
Yes	161	93.6
No	11	6.4
TOTAL	172	100.0
Intention of sending sons to school after elementary		
Yes	169	90.4
No	18	9.6
TOTAL	187	100.0
Whether or not husband gives permission if wanted to work		
Yes	131	64.2
No	73	35.8
TOTAL	204	100.0
Does permanent employment increase women's status in the family?		
Yes	147	64.2
No	74	32.3
Undecided	8	3.5
TOTAL	229	100.0
What should be done to increase women' occupational opportunities in rural areas		
Education should be provided for girls	116	49.4
Rural occupations and handcrafts	43	18.3
Agribusiness	61	26.0
Women should stay home	12	5.1
Other	3	1.3
TOTAL	235	100.0
Out of the following, which one you desire most?		
500 dekar farmland	35	15.2
A permanent work with 1000 dollars salary	116	50.4
A business which I can run by myself	58	25.2
I only want to take care of my children and husband	21	9.1
TOTAL	230	100.0

Objective four of the study was to find if significant differences existed among the three research areas in terms of selected demographic characteristics. Results are presented in Table 4. Out of four demographic variables three were significant at the 0.05 level of probability or better. These were education, marital status and occupation. Respondents who had an education beyond elementary school were 25% Kahramanmaras, 28% Balikesir, and 47% Kayseri respondents while those who had only elementary school education or illiterate were 40% Kahramanmaras, 30% Balikesir, and 30% Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test conducted between the variables of research region and education yielded a significant association indicating that having an education beyond elementary school is different among the three research region (X^2 (2, n = 238) = 8.01, p = .018).

In terms of marital status, 38% of married respondents were from Kahramanmaras, 33% from Balikesir, and 29% from Kayseri while those who are single, divorced or widowed were 27% from Kahramanmaras, 20% from Balikesir, and 53% from Kayseri. The chi-square test between these two variables resulted a significant association indicating a significant marital status difference among the three research region (X^2 (2, n = 238) = 11.63, p = .003).

In terms of occupation, housewives were 44% Kahramanmaras, 37% Balikesir, and 19% Kayseri respondents while those whose occupation were farming were 9% Kahramanmaras, 4% Balikesir, and 87% Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test between these two variables resulted a significant association indicating a significant occupation difference among the three research region (X^2 (4, n = 238) = 72.04, p ≤ .01). No significant association was found between the variables age and research region (see Table 4).

Table 4. Chi-square Comparison of Selected Demographic Variables among the Three Research Areas

Variable	Kahramanmaras		Balikesir		Kayseri		X^2	P-Value
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Age								
≤ 35	37	32.2	38	33.0	40	34.8		
36 – 50	28	41.8	18	26.9	21	31.3		
≥ 50	18	32.1	14	25.0	24	42.9	3.50	.478
Education								
Beyond elementary school	21	25.3	23	27.7	39	47.0		
Elementary school or illiterate	62	40.0	47	30.3	46	29.7	8.010*	.018
Marital status								
Married	66	37.9	57	32.8	51	29.3		
Single, divorced or widow	17	26.6	13	20.3	34	53.1	11.63**	≤.01
Occupation								
Housewife	70	44.3	58	36.7	30	19.0		
Farming	4	8.9	2	4.4	39	86.7		
Other	9	25.7	10	28.6	16	45.7	72.04**	≤.01

Objective five of the study was to find if significant differences existed among the three research region in terms of the status of rural women in the family. Results are presented in Table 5. Eight chi-square tests were conducted and six of them were significant at the 0.05 level of probability or better. These were marital age, type of marriage, time of official wedding, number of births given, relativity with husband, and husband's occupation. Respondents who got married when they were 20 or older years of age were 28% Kahramanmaras, 38% Balikesir, and 33% Kayseri respondents while those who got married under 20 were 45% Kahramanmaras, 24% Balikesir, and 33% Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test between marital age and research area yield significant difference indicating that marital age for rural women is associated with their region (X^2 (2, n = 203) = 7.32, p = 0.26).

Type of marriage was the second significant variable showed differences among the regions. Arranged marriage occurred 40% in Kahramanmaras, 19% in Balikesir, and 41% in Kayseri respondents while marriage after meeting several times category occurred 17% in Kahramanmaras, 50% in Balikesir and 33% in Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test between type of marriage and research region resulted in significant association indicating that these two variables are not independent ((X^2 (6, n = 203) = 29.19, p ≤ .01).

Time of official wedding also showed significant differences among the three areas. Those who had their official wedding with marriage were 31% Kahramamaras, 40% Balikesir, and 28% Kayseri respondents while those who had their official wedding after their wedding were 56% Kahramanmaras, 3% Balikesir, and 41% Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test between time of official wedding and research area yielded significant association indicating that these two variables are not independent (X^2 (2, n = 205) = 30.21, p ≤ .01).

The fourth significant variable associated with the research area was number of births given among rural women in the three locations. Those who gave 3 or less births were 32% Kahramanmaras, 38% Balikesir, and 30% Kayseri respondents while those who gave births more than three were 58% Kahramanmaras, 11% Balikesir, and 31% Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test between these two variables was significant indicating that number of births given in not independent of research regions (X^2 (2, n = 194) = 18.64, p ≤ .01).

Relativity with husband also showed significant differences among the regions. Those who were relatives with their husbands were 33% Kahramanmaras, 9% Balikesir, and 59% Kayseri respondents while those who were not relatives with their husbands were 44% Kahramanmaras, 38% Balikesir, and 18% Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test between these two variables showed that relativity with husband is not independent of research areas (X^2 (2, n = 203) = 39.3, p ≤ .01).

Finally, husband's occupation was the last significant variable associated with research regions. Those whose husbands' occupation were farming were 25% Kahramanmaras, 30% Balikesir, and 32%

Kayseri respondents while those whose husbands' occupation were other that farming were 49% Kahramanmaras, 28% Balikesir, and 23% Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test between these two variables resulted in significant association indicating that husbands occupation is not independent of research area (X^2 (2, n = 202) = 14.07, $p \leq .01$). The study found that the variables of using birth control methods and having social security were not significant associated with research region (see Table 5).

Objective six of the study was to find if significant differences existed among the three research areas in terms of thoughts about the future of rural women. Twelve variables were investigated to accomplish this objective and four variables were found to be significant at the 0.05 level probabilities or better. The first significant variable was the most favourable place of residence. Respondents who wanted to live in cities or metropolitan areas were 43% Kahramanmaras, 19% Balikesir, and 38% Kayseri respondents while those who wanted to live in other place of residencies were 27% Kahramanmaras, 39% Balikesir, and 32% Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test showed that the variable, the most favourable place of residence significantly associated with the variable of research area. This association indicates that the two variables are not independent (X^2 (2, n = 232) = 11.88, $p \leq .01$).

Table 5. Chi-square Comparison of Selected status of Rural Women in the Family among the Three research Regions

Variable	Kahramanmaras		Balikesir		Kayseri		X^2	P-Value
	N	%	n	%	N	%		
Marital age								
20 or higher	20	27.8	28	38.9	24	33.3		
Younger than 20	59	45.0	31	23.7	41	31.3	7.32*	.026
Type of marriage								
Arranged marriage	43	40.2	20	18.7	44	41.1		
Running away with husband	22	52.4	17	40.5	3	7.1		
After meeting several of times	6	16.7	18	50.0	12	33.3		
After Introduced by a relatives	8	44.4	4	22.2	6	33.3	29.19**	≤.01
Time of official wedding								
With marriage	45	31.9	57	40.4	39	27.7		
After marriage of N/A	36	56.3	2	3.1	26	40.6	30.21**	≤.01
Number of births given								
3 or less	41	31.8	49	38.0	39	30.2		
More than 3	38	58.5	7	10.8	20	30.8	18.64**	≤.01
Use of birth control methods								
Yes	51	41.5	40	32.5	32	26.0		
No	31	37.8	22	26.8	29	35.4	2.13	.344
Relativity with husband								
Yes	23	32.9	6	8.6	41	58.6		
No	58	43.6	51	38.3	24	18.0	39.3**	≤.01
Social security								
Yes	65	38.2	51	30.0	54	31.8		
No	17	54.8	6	19.4	8	25.8	3.12	.210
Husband's occupation								
Farmer	18	24.7	22	30.1	33	45.2		
Other then farming	63	48.8	36	27.9	30	23.3	14.07**	≤.01

The second significant variable was whether or not husband gives permission if a woman wants to work. Those who can get permission from their husbands in case of finding an employment were 33% Kahramanmaras, 29% Balikesir, and 38% Kayseri respondents while those who cannot get permission were 49% Kahramanmaras, 28% Balikesir, and 23% Kayseri respondents. The chi-square test revealed significant association between these variables indicating that permission from husband is not independent from the research areas (X^2 (2, n = 214) = 6.28, p = .043).

The third significant variable was the question that asks what should be done to increase women's occupation in rural areas. Those who agreed with the idea that education should be provided for girls were 45% Kahramanmaras, 28% Balikesir, and 27% Kayseri respondents while those who agreed with the idea that rural occupations and handcrafts should be supported were 26% Kahramanmaras, 58% Balikesir, and 16% Kayseri respondents. The other two categories included in this variable had also different ratios among the three research regions. The chi-square test resulted in a significant association between these two variables which showed that the opinions differ among the regions (X^2 (6, n = 235) = 44.22, $p \leq .01$).

The last significant variable for this objective of the study was rural women's preference out of four selected options which may secure their future and make them better off. Those who desired 500 declares of farmland were 37% Kahramanmaras, 9% Balikesir, and 54% Kayseri respondents while those who desired a permanent work with $1000 salary were 26% Kahramanmaras, 40% Balikesir, and 35% Kayseri respondents. The categories that "a business which I can run by myself" and "I only want to take care of my children and husband" also had different ratios among the regions. The chi-square test resulted in a significant association between these two variables which showed that rural women's preferences out of four selected options significantly differed among the regions (X^2 (6, n = 235) = 44.22, $p \leq .01$).

Table 6. Chi-square Comparison of Selected Thoughts about the Future Variables among the Three Research Regions

Variable	Kahramanmaras		Balikesir		Kayseri		X^2	P-Value
	N	%	N	%	N	%		
The most desired occupation for woman								
Officer or any permanent job	52	33.8	39	25.3	63	40.9		
Other occupations	31	39.7	27	34.6	20	25.6	5.46	.065
The most favourable place of residence								
City or metropolis	51	42.5	23	19.2	46	38.3		
Other residencies	32	28.6	44	39.3	36	32.1	11.88	≤.01
Ideal occupation for husband								
Officer	23	34.3	21	31.3	23	34.3		
Other occupations	52	34.4	43	28.5	56	37.1	.227	.893
Would you continue your marriage if you were economically independent								
Yes	75	37.7	61	30.7	63	31.7		
No	6	23.1	6	23.1	14	53.8	5.11	.077
Ideal occupation for daughters								
Teacher	35	41.2	26	30.6	24	28.2		
Other occupations	42	43.8	20	20.8	34	35.4	2.48	.289
Ideal occupation for sons								
Doctor	21	34.4	18	29.5	22	36.1		
Other occupations	52	43.7	25	21.0	42	35.3	2.08	.353
Intention of sending daughters to school after elementary								
Yes	72	47.1	35	22.9	46	30.1		
No	8	38.1	4	19.0	9	42.9	1.39	.497
Intention of sending sons to school after elementary								
Yes	70	42.4	40	24.2	55	33.3		
No	8	32.0	9	36.0	8	36.0	1.75	.417
Whether or not husband gives permission if wanted to work								
Yes	48	33.1	42	29.0	55	37.9		
No	34	49.3	19	27.5	16	23.2	6.28*	.043
Does permanent employment higher women's status in the family?								
Yes	59	40.1	35	23.8	53	36.1		
No	23	28.0	30	36.6	29	35.4	5.18	.075
What should be done to increase women's occupation in rural areas								
Education should be provided for girls	52	44.8	33	28.4	31	26.7		
Rural occupations and handcrafts	11	25.6	25	58.1	7	16.3		
Agribusiness	17	27.9	7	11.5	37	60.7		
Woman should stay home	3	20.0	4	26.7	8	53.3	44.22	≤.01
Which one you desire most?								
500 dekar of farmland	13	37.1	3	8.6	19	54.3		
A permanent work with $1000 salary	30	25.9	46	39.7	40	34.5		
A business which I can run by myself	32	55.2	13	22.4	13	22.4		
I only want to take care of my children and husband	7	33.3	5	23.8	9	42.8	26.64	≤.01

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted with the purpose of investigating demographic characteristics, status in the family, and future expectations of rural women in three different regions of Turkey. A profile of rural

women in the research area can be drawn as a 38 year's old married woman with an elementary school degree and housewife occupation.

Results related to the status of rural women strongly support the idea that the traditional rural society is still persistent in Turkey. Women should marry in a childish age, produce children, serve her husband, and work in the field. Once the majority of rural women get married under 20, it is out of question for them to receive education beyond elementary school. So the benefits of education cannot be utilized among rural women unless the marital age goes up. Of course education is not only for single people but once early marriage is accompanied with three to four children, as well as, with housework, education really becomes impossible. Results related to type of marriage indicate that taboos about meeting or dating before marriage still exist in the rural areas. Although official wedding is enforced by law there are still married people without official wedding. This result indicates that man has the power and freedom of divorcing his wife without paying any alimony. The dependence of woman to her husband makes it almost impossible to ask for a divorce if marriage doesn't work well. Rural society's look on a divorced woman puts also a pressure on woman, so she should continue this marriage in every adverse circumstance. These situations, of course, reduce the happiness and wellbeing of rural societies as a whole.

Results regarding the ideal occupations for rural women, for their husbands, daughters and children indicate that entrepreneurship among rural women is quite low. This is actually the case with the majority of Turkish people who are after a permanent governmental job with a satisfactory salary and social security system. As long as there have been almost 12% unemployment rate for two decades, and many small entrepreneurs ran out of business, individuals have little encouragement to start their own business. Once an employment is obtained from a governmental organization, there is no need for many individuals to take risk for establishing own business.

Findings of the study showed significant differences among the three research regions. Balikesir is in the western part (Marmara Region) while Kayseri is in the Central Anatolia Region, and Kahramanmaras is in the East Mediterranean Region of Turkey. In general and local elections more votes goes to liberal and social democrat parties in Balikesir while conservatives, religious and nationalist parties receive the majority of votes in Kayseri and Kahramanmaras. This situation probably reflected to results of this study, especially when examining how the variables of marital age, type of marriage, time of official wedding, number of births given, and relativity with husband are associated with research region (see Table 5). From all of these variables, Balikesir is more likely to show the characteristics of a western society when compared with Kahramanmaras and Kayseri.

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