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# DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN TURKEY: A REVIEW OF THE THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

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## ÖZET

Çalışma hayatında cinsiyete dayalı ayrımcılık; verimlilik göz ardı edilerek aynı yetenek, eğitim ve deneyime sahip bir işçi grubunun, cinsiyet veya ırk gibi kişisel özelliklere göre değerlendirilerek daha az ücret alması veya işe almada, yerleştirmede ve terfide haksızlık yapılması olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, bu tanımın ışığı altında Türkiye de cinsiyet ayrımcılığını teorik ve ampirik açıdan incelemektir. Bu konu son otuz yılda çok popüler olmasına rağmen çalışmaların büyük bir çoğunluğu İngiltere, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Avustralya gibi gelişmiş ülkelerle sınırlı kalmıştır. Bu çalışmada, cinsiyete dayalı ayrımcılık konusunda varolan bütün teorik ve ampirik çalışmalar değerlendirilip geçerlilikleri gelişmekte olan ve geleneklerin hakim olduğu bir ülke olan Türkiye için analiz edilecektir.

## ABSTRACT

Labour market discrimination can be defined as occurring when one group of workers with abilities, education, training, and experience equal to another group of workers are provided inferior treatment in hiring, occupational access, promotion or wage rates on the basis of some personal characteristic, such as gender or race, which is unrelated to productivity. In the light of this definition, the purpose of this study is to analyse gender discrimination in the Turkish labour market. Studies of gender discrimination in the labour market have been very popular during the last three decades, but most of the research on labour market discrimination has been confined to developed countries such as the UK, the USA, and Austria etc.

*In this paper we analyse the existing theoretical and empirical literature of gender discrimination and evaluate their relevance in a developing country such as Turkey where traditional and cultural beliefs and norm are still prevalent.*

## INTRODUCTION

It is well-known fact that there is a significant pay difference between men and women workers all over the world. Women are minority groups in employment and concentrated in certain generally low-paying occupations and industries. Empirical studies of labour market discrimination in both developed and developing countries show that there are persistent wage discrepancies between men and women workers (Birdsall and Sabot, 1991; Kasnakoglu and Dayioglu, 1997). This finding conflicts with the prediction of the perfectly competitive neoclassical model of the labour market.

In this paper, we firstly start from the explanation of what we mean by labour market discrimination and this will be followed by the presentation and evaluation of the orthodox theory of discrimination. In section 3, the neoclassical theory of discrimination with complete information is first presented. The competitive and non-competitive models are dealt with. This will include 'the human capital hypothesis', 'the overcrowding hypothesis', and Becker's 'taste for discrimination hypothesis'. Next competitive neoclassical models with imperfect information, which lead to 'statistical discrimination', will be examined. The institutional approaches are then reviewed in section 4, as this is an alternative to the neoclassical theory. Finally, concluding remarks are presented in section 5.

## DEFINITIONS OF DISCRIMINATION

Labour market discrimination has been described as occurring when one group of workers with abilities, education, training, and experience equal to another group of workers are provided inferior treatment in hiring, occupational access, promotion or wage rates on the basis of some personal characteristic, such as gender or race, which is unrelated to productivity (King, 1990: 111).

In analysing discrimination it is very important to understand what is meant by discrimination and to recognize that it can be of different types and take different forms. For instance, women's inferior position in the labour market can involve wage discrimination (where equally productive men and women are employed in the same job but being paid different wages); employment discrimination (where women face lower opportunities in being hired and /or promoted although they have the same qualifications and experience as men). There are three essential forms of employment discrimination. Hiring discrimination takes place when males are preferred in the recruitment process even though females have equivalent employment-related characteristics. Promotion discrimination arises when women with equivalent achievement to men are treated differently in promotion decisions and in access to further training. Finally, firing discrimination happens when women are selected in termination decisions because of their gender rather than their relative productivity.

## THE THEORIES OF LABOUR MARKET DISCRIMINATION

The predominant neoclassical theory predicts that in the competitive labor market, wages are equal to the marginal product of labor and that two equally productive workers will be paid the same wage, at least in the long run. In a competitive world with profit-seeking entrepreneurs wage discrimination cannot remain in the long run. If a minority group of workers (women) have their wage discounted relative to their true productivities this means that the unit wage costs of these workers are less than that of the preferred group of workers (men). Consequently profit-maximizing entrepreneurs will switch their attention to women and the free-market process will remove the discrimination. Conversely, if they continue to practice their discriminatory preferences and prejudices in a free market economy, it will be very costly to them.

Consequently they will be punished, in the form of losing profits and sales and subsequently these employers should be driven out of business by non-discriminatory competitors.

Williams (1987) and Darity (1995) point out that the neoclassical economic theory establishes, on the assumption of perfect competition, that no single individual agent in a market economy has the capacity to affect price via his or her own decisions. This means that all market participants are price takers. In the long-run the full effects of entry to profit maximizing industry works efficiently to ensure that only 'normal' profit is earned. At which point there is no further motivation for entry.

However, Darity (1995) claims that 'Austrian economics' assumes an 'absolute process' view of competition, rather than a 'state of affairs' view of the neoclassical competition. "Postulating the existence of a latent reservoir of alert entrepreneurs ready to seize any profit opportunities that might arise, Austrian competition deems it largely irrelevant whether individual participants in the market are price takers or not. The key is the capability of human beings, motivated by pecuniary desires, to pursue all conceivable opportunities to reap economic gain" (Darity, 1995: 586. Also see for extensive information Darity, 1989).

Freeman (1973) argues that if there are continuing wage disparities between majority (men) and minority (women) group of workers, this must be due to non-competitive, non-labour market discrimination which leads to productivity differences between men and women (Freeman, 1973: 284-85). He explains that this non-competitive, non-labour market discrimination involves three types of discriminatory activities as follows: 1. Governmental discrimination in the provision of education and schooling, 2. Unequal access to government employment, 3. Social pressures and extra market cost incurred by non-discriminatory market participants because of this non-discriminatory behaviour. These three main factors inhibit the disadvantaged group gaining an endowment of human capital equivalent to the advantaged group of workers. As Darity (1995: xxxiii) argues that

"Freeman is absolutely correct in his claim that it is virtually impossible to tease a theory of persistent economic discrimination out of the world envisioned in neoclassical economics under free-market conditions. And if labour market discrimination is not a vanishing phenomenon there

is a major unresolved theoretical anomaly for conventional economics”.

Therefore we can explain enduring discrepancies in wages of men and women under the several sub-headings as follows.

### ***The Human Capital Approach***

It is argued that the explanation for minority workers' low relative pay and occupational status lies in their relative deficiency in human capital. This theory, which relates an individual's investment in education and training with his or her lifetime earnings, was developed by Mincer (1958) and Becker (1957).

Human capital can be attained in educational institutions, via on-job-training or from the experience of working in a job. It is described as 'investment in himself'. Bergmann (1986) criticizes human capital theorists who claim that on-job-training results from a decision by a worker to 'invest in himself'. This neglects the fact that it is employers, and sometimes male-dominated unions, which decide who is to get such training. If women have less on-job-training than men, this may be the consequence of employment discrimination.

The important point of the human capital approach is that men and women may not be perfectly substitutable for one another. Women may accumulate less human capital through work experience, if their childbearing and rearing interrupts their labour force participation. Their human capital during a period outside the labour market will be depreciated, therefore productivity differentials between men and women will arise. When women workers re-enter the labour market, they will earn less than men who had continuous market experience.

In addition, models that are based on human capital characteristics argue that women engage in less off-the-job training because they expect to work less, and that they choose occupations for which interruptions to employment are not costly, as skills do not depreciate markedly and earnings do not change markedly over a lifetime.

According to this approach differences in human capital between men and women are generated

from outside the labour market and have their impact via the supply function. This can be occurring because of biological or social factors-particularly the socialization process imposing child-care responsibilities on women. Consequently they may have higher turnover and absenteeism, and less job experience than men. In addition they might have less geographical flexibility in supply as home location is dominated by male employment considerations.

Turkish women have access to childcare support within the extended family in a way, which is not usual in Northern Europe and North America. This means that the human capital approach may have lower significance, as there is less reason for the Turkish women to interrupt work when they become mothers. The support provided by the extended family is confirmed in Ecevit's study, which demonstrated that 79 percent of childcare activities for Turkish women in manufacturing sector was provided by grandmothers or other female relatives (Ecevit, 1986: 314). In addition, there is a disincentive to withdraw from secure employment because available jobs are already scarce and the unemployment rate is very high (Ecevit, 1986; World Bank, 1995).

### ***Statistical Discrimination***

A further explanation is that labour market discrimination may emerge from information costs in hiring labour: for instance trouble in acquiring detailed information for each applicant. If employers believe that the average productivity of two easily identifiable groups varies, then they may use gender, race etc. as a cheap screening device. This is an alternative neoclassical theory of 'statistical discrimination', which maintains the assumption of perfectly competitive labour markets, was developed by Phelps (1972).

In a world of imperfect information employers face risks in hiring workers, and race, and gender become inexpensive screening devices. If employers believe that there is a systematic differential between the gender or races, in their reliability, aptitude and job stability, this is sufficient to create a permanent differential in wages between women (black) and men (white). "As it is an expensive and uncertain business to test each individual applicant's ability and motivation, employers simply assume them to have the average characteristics of the demographic category into which they fall" (King, 1990: 119). If it is believed that most blacks are less efficient or unreliable, and

that most women leave their jobs to get married or for child-bearing activities, then all blacks and all women are put in the same category by employers and they will be expected to be employed only at lower wage rates (Arrow, 1973).

In the case of statistical discrimination theory, in contrast with Becker's theory of 'taste for discrimination', which will be explained in the next Section, employers do not discriminate against women or blacks because of distaste or prejudice. Instead they discriminate against them because they believe that hiring women or blacks rather than men or whites is not profitable for them on average.

In the statistical theory of discrimination, it is argued that on average female workers are not perfect substitutes for male workers, thus the reality of the situation implies that wage discrepancies between men and women arises from a non-discriminatory labour market. This argument, that differences in average productivity characteristics leads to a preference for males, is in effect a subclass of human capital theory, and therefore Bergmann calls it '*human capital theory in drag*'.

Discrimination against women in Turkey may partly reflect the model of statistical theory of discrimination. In the Turkish labour market, information about real productivity is difficult to obtain, so when the employers are not able to obtain information and statistics about their applicants' productivity, they trust prevailing assumptions and beliefs. Ecevit (1986; 1991) shows these powerful prejudices against women in her study. In contrast to the reality of women's situation in the labour market it is believed that because of their domestic responsibilities women are not as reliable as male workers, and that they withdraw from their work when they become a mother or when they get married. Thus it is assumed that the turnover rate is higher than that of men and attachment to work is lower. Also in Turkey it is argued that "a female household member is not principally responsible for the upkeep of the household; rather she works to keep the household supplied with non-essentials" (Ecevit, 1991: 60). So, she can easily leave her job when she is needed by her family for domestic reasons. These kinds of negative stereotypes penalize those women who are as committed to the labour force as men.

### **Becker's Theory of 'Taste for discrimination'**

Gary Becker (1957) focuses on 'taste for discrimination' i.e. non-pecuniary motivation as the source of discrimination by entrepreneurs, male employees and consumers. Becker applies Adam Smith's approach of 'compensating variation' to develop his treatment of discrimination.

Becker (1957: 6) argues that "if an individual has a 'taste for discrimination', he must act as if he were willing to pay something, either directly or in the form of a reduced income, to be associated with some persons instead of others". The taste for discrimination is due to individuals' preferences and prejudices. Employers are prepared to sacrifice profit to avoid female workers, male employees are prepared to sacrifice wages to avoid female workers, and consumer prepared to pay higher prices to avoid female provision because of this distaste.

In this model, it is assumed that there is perfect competition, which means that there is free entry and exit for employers, and the two groups, women (W) and men (M) are assumed to be equally productive. Becker introduces a discrimination coefficient (DC), which is the discriminatory reward the employer feels he must incur given his preferences for male workers. If the wage cost to the employer of a male worker is  $w$ , the effective wage cost of employing a female worker is  $w(1+a)$ , and Becker describes the effective wage cost of employing a female worker as a 'net wage rate'. Similarly, if a male employee gets a money wage of  $w$  when working together with a female, then the male employee acts as if his net hourly pay is  $w(1-b)$ . Finally, if a male or a female buys a good produced by a female for a price  $p$ , then the male acts as if the net cost is  $p(1+c)$ . The parameters  $a$ ,  $b$ , and  $c$  are the discrimination coefficients (DC). When the parameters are greater than zero, the DC is identified with 'disutility' and it measures the 'psychic costs', which associated with the disliked circumstance (Darity, 1995: 430).

Becker, using this approach, explains why wage disparities occur between these two groups. It is considered that there are two ascriptively different but equivalent productivity groups on average, when employers have a preference for a member of one group over the other. Because of ascriptive differences, the employer is willing to pay a reward for workers who are preferred by him/her. This argument depends upon a high degree of homogeneity of gender preferences amongst all employers, and amongst even the potential employers. The male group of workers likewise must have a uniform taste for discrimination.

However, in a competitive world with free entry and exist, 'Austrian' entrepreneurs should eliminate such discrimination i.e. by employing cheaper women workers with equivalent productivity, ensuring lower unit wage cost than the discriminatory employers.

When female workers (who are as productive as male workers) are hired, their employers will benefit from higher profits than their rivals because they can pay women a lower wage. This would affect other employers' decisions forcing them to imitate the non-discriminatory employer, therefore the demand for women would increase and eventually wage discrimination would be destroyed. In the case of male employee prejudice, with male workers working higher wages as a reward to work side by side with female workers, if the discriminating and discriminated groups of workers are perfect substitutes, the employers may react by hiring either all women or all men in the workplace, and competition will ensure males and females will be paid the same wages. Therefore in this case, in the long run, segregation takes place instead of wage differentials (Becker, 1957; Darity, 1995).

The essential problem with Becker's theory is that it cannot explain persistent differences in earnings between equally productive women and men in the long run. In his model gender differentials are necessarily a short-run or disequilibrium phenomenon, whereas there are persistent wage discrepancies between men and women workers in many countries. Therefore the actual long-term dynamics of real world labor markets cannot be reconciled with Becker's pure labor market discrimination explanation. In his model male employers and employees are willing to give up money income for the added satisfaction of avoiding women, but this is not consistent with neoclassical theory because the incentive of monetary reward will induce non-discriminatory entrants to take advantage of the lower costs involved in hiring women (Darity, 1995: 432).

Nevertheless, as Birdsall and Sabot (1991: 2) state "a variant of this strand of the theory of discrimination may be of particular relevance in low income societies where social traditions still exercise a powerful influence on economic behavior". Beliefs about differences between the genders that are grounded in traditional cultural values contribute to the persistence of gender discrimination. These beliefs take as axiomatic that women's primary sphere is the home and that of men is the workplace, and assume innate gender differentials in personality and physical

characteristics that are supposed to suit women and men. There are patriarchal relations and gender based cultural roles in family and society in Turkey. Women's status is determined generally by tradition, custom and religion and employers think women's main role is as homemaker, and men are the breadwinners, so this belief in the appropriate roles for women and men does affect the wages, promotion and hiring of women. Women are paid less than men because it is thought that women are dependent on men and the main breadwinners are men, so they must be paid more (World Bank, 1993; Kocak, 1999; Colak and Ardor, 2001).

In the Turkish case, male employers and employees do have some prejudices and this social custom reinforces different types of roles among men and women. The male role is expected to be main source of their family income i.e., 'head of the household' and the female role is proposed to be mother and housewife and their primary assignment is domestic jobs and only secondly as workers. For example, it is assumed that all women in society lived with a man, either their husband or their father. The women's wage is seen as a supplement to the men's wage and therefore their lower pay and lower position in the labor market is not seen as problematic by the society.

In addition, the employment status of women in the labor market reflects social and traditional beliefs in Turkish society. According to the latest data, 51.2 percent of women are engaged in agriculture as unpaid family workers in 2000. The number of women working as employees is very low as well, although it increased from 21.5 percent in 1994 to 38.4 percent in 2000 (Colak and Kilic, 2001). The relative employment status of women confirms that women are still accepted as homemakers and mothers rather than breadwinners. Only a minority of women is able to control their own economic lives. The majority of females is seem to be economic minority and generally economically depended on men.

### ***The Monopsony Model***

Fourthly, wage differences can arise from the special conditions of a monopsonist with a divided labour force and where the two groups have different alternative job opportunities. This model of monopsony was first presented by Robinson (1934) and developed by Madden (1973).

In the monopsony model, there is only one employer or alternatively collusion between employers who act as a single buyer and face an upward sloping labour supply curve. The level of market demand is affected by the employer's buying decisions. As we have explained above in the human capital model, in perfect competition, the worker's wage equals his or her marginal productivity and the wage differences between the male and female workers consequently depend on the differentials in productivities produced by factors such as years of schooling, experience etc. In the monopsony model, however, workers are paid less than their marginal productivities and the extent of disparity between wages and marginal productivities is based on the wage elasticity of the labour supply of each group to the firm (Blau and Jusenius, 1976).

For monopsonistic discrimination to arise two conditions must be met:

1. the labour supply must be in separate and identifiable groups
2. these labour groups must have different wage elasticities of labour supply. If the supply of women tends to be more inelastic than that of men a profit maximizing monopsonist pays male workers higher wages than female workers. Madden (1973) argues that this discriminatory monopsony power emerges from the monopsonist employer supremacy and the dominant male power in society. The lower wage elasticity of female labour supply arises from women's lower labour mobility and the lower demand for women in alternative occupations in comparison to men. Firstly, household location is generally dominated by male needs, therefore the women's place of residence depend on the husband's place of residence. Consequently women are relatively immobile in the labour market. Secondly the employers and customers may categorize workers by gender and prefer them in different occupations. Social forms and tradition determine this occupational distribution and disadvantaged groups such as women or blacks may be confined to relatively narrow range of jobs compared with the dominant whites or males.

Blau and Jusenius (1976) have challenged this supply elasticity argument. They argue that women's supply curve may be more elastic than men's, as women may be a more mobile than men because they already have available a job outside market as a housewife. Consequently their relative immobility within the market may be compensated by their ability to easily transfer to outside the labour market.

This claim is consistent with the finding of Killingsworth in 1990 for the empirical study of labour supply in the United States. It is shown that the wage elasticity of labour supply for women is greater than men, which demonstrates that the economy-wide labour market may not correspond to monopsonistic discrimination. It is suggested that the Robinson and Madden monopsony model is not generally applicable to the developed economy such as the United States (see Ashenfelter and Oaxaca, 1991). Furthermore, Ashenfelter and Oaxaca (1991: 37) argue that "there is really no direct evidence provided on labour supply elasticities and on extent of monopsony power in the developing economy labour markets" such as Brazil, India, and Nicaragua. In the contemporary world of single parents this alleged mobility to a housewife role outside the labour market is of diminished relevance. The female wage elasticity of labour supply could be less in different occupations and industries because of the inhibited occupational choices for women.

In the Turkish case, there are some restrictions, which stem from the labour market, such as the employers' traditional attitudes and beliefs about women workers, which restrict women to certain occupations and therefore influences the elasticity of female labour supply.

## The Overcrowding Approach

It is argued that gender discrimination in the labour market may arise from a general case of non-competitive markets, with women restricted to a narrow range of jobs, whereas men have unlimited access. This is the 'crowding' effect mentioned long ago by Fawcett and Edgeworth.

Millicent Fawcett was the first to put on paper the 'crowding' hypothesis in 1918. She argued that employers' prejudices, social custom and trade unions denied certain occupations to women, thus leading to the overcrowding of women in other, basically unskilled and low status occupations, which forced female wages downwards (Tzannatos, 1989). In 1922, Edgeworth formalized this notion in terms of neoclassical demand and supply analysis and, the crowding hypothesis is generally credited to him. Also he mentioned that "the pressure of male trade unions appears to be largely responsible for that crowding of women into a comparatively few occupations, which is universally recognized as a main factor in the depression of their wages" (Edgeworth, 1922: 432).

This model was subsequently applied by Bergmann (1971) to the case of racial discrimination in the USA. Although she revives the over-crowding hypothesis in race discrimination problems, she also gives some reference to the problem of gender discrimination. It is assumed in her model, which also applicable to gender, that there is a one commodity economy, with production specified by a constant elasticity of substitution production function utilizing three factors which are capital, black (female) labour and white (male) labour. If there is no discrimination in employment this means that all jobs are accessible to both blacks and whites (genders), and labour will be distributed equally so that marginal products are equal in all occupations. Also both black (female) and white (male) workers will receive wages equal to their marginal productivities. On the other hand, in the case of discrimination in employment, black (female) workers are crowded into a relatively small number of occupations and their marginal product will be lower than in white (male) occupations because of this abundance of supply relative to the demand. In these positions, black (female) workers receive lower wages as an employment-constrained group, and white (male) workers as a non-constrained group receive higher wages than if there were not restraints in mobility between the white (male) and black (female) sectors. In other words, in this case both races (genders) are paid wages equal to their marginal products, but because of the forcing of women into a small number of occupations, and the consequent low capital-labour ratio in these occupations blacks' (womens') marginal productivity will be lower than whites' (mens') (Bergmann, 1971).

The main distinctive feature of the 'crowding theory' is that it abandons the concept of perfectly competitive labour markets and presents the idea of discrimination by labour market segregation. According to this theory men get more pay than women, even when they have very similar human capital, even when they have similar jobs, because they are not competing in the same market. Many jobs are allocated for one gender or the other, so men and women are selling themselves and their human capital in segregated markets, a separate market for each gender. Men sell their labour in the market where jobs labelled for men are filled, and women are not allowed to compete with them in that market (Bergmann, 1989: 49).

The Bergmann formulation consists of two chief assumptions: firstly workers are identical with respect to potential productivity, and secondly demand side conditions are responsible for the overcrowding.

Blau and Jusenius (1976) remark that "through her inclusion of employer tastes, Bergmann unites Becker's theory of discrimination with Fawcett's and Edgeworth's. ... This reliance on employer tastes as the casual factor of occupational segregation does not appear to be sufficient. It is not clear why so many employers would have such tastes against women in certain occupations, nor is it clear why employers' aversion should be so 'strong' that they are not compensated for their disutility by the prevailing male-female pay differential" (Blau and Jusenius, 1976: 184-185).

The Bergmann model fails to clarify the significant degree of occupational segregation between male and female and it cannot present accurate analysis of the causes and mechanisms of labour market segregation within each sector (OECD, 1985: 40). However, Polachek (1981) claims that the human capital theory presents a good explanation for occupational gender segregation, or crowding of women, where the differences in wages between men and women is due to women's deliberate choice of certain jobs which are easy to leave and re-enter. Due to domestic reasons such as childbearing responsibilities and housework activities, women's employment is intermittent, therefore a woman has an incentive to choose lower-paid female occupations rather than male occupations where on-job-experience and continuous participation is vital.

England (1982), using regression analysis, shows that the propositions deduced from Polacheck's thesis are in conflict with her empirical evidence and she claims that human capital theory cannot explain the occupational gender segregation. England (1982) finds no evidence that it is rational for women who plan for intermittent employment to choose traditional female occupations in the US. In addition, she shows that women would receive higher earnings if they were employed in predominantly male occupations. Also according to Ecevit's (1986: 351) study on Turkish women in manufacturing industry, Turkish women who work because of economic necessity do not leave their job due to domestic work and childcare. Therefore this argument of Polachek that women choose deliberately 'women's jobs' and are crowded in particular lower paid occupations from choice is challenging.

It is argued by Bergmann and Darity (1981) that the essential idea of exclusion of women from a range of occupations is the economic self-interest of men, which contrasts with Becker's model where male employees may have a non-pecuniary taste for excluding women. This phenomenon is referred to

by Darity and Bergmann as '*protecting your turf*' (1981: 49).

In addition they suggest that, if even a small number of men workers are not happy about women moving into non-traditional job, this can create distress in the workplace. If the trouble-making employees are long term and experienced workers, the employer may face serious loss of productivity in the workplace if he insists on recruiting women workers. This idea of cohesive same-gender groups defending their 'turf' implies they act to maximize their territory (Bergmann and Darity, 1981: 49).

Male workers sometimes act to 'protect their turf' through the actions of trade unions, and access to training, etc., As it is pointed out by Hartmann (1976) the workers' organizations play a role in maintaining gender segregation in labour market. For example, the employers may be put off hiring females in male occupations by the power and pressure of male employees and male-dominated labour unions. Therefore the monopoly power of male workers in union usually supports occupational discrimination against women.

It is doubtful, however, if the trade unions or male organizations do play a substantial role in creating gender segregation in the Turkish case. The unions' main plan has been to increase membership and represent as many workers as possible, so as to be recognized as a bargaining agent by employers. Thus, they have generally encouraged the membership of both genders, and they do not exclude women from the union. In addition women are not yet a real threat to men in the labour market because of the lower proportion of female labours in industry (Ecevit, 1991: 72).

On the other hand, the government may discriminate against women to protect the dominant group (males) by constraining the occupations open to women workers. This may be by 'protective' legislation that does not permit women to work in jobs that require weight-lifting, night work, or overtime. The government may constrain the employers to employ females in only 'women's jobs' so that these are overcrowded. Also government may discriminate against women in the supply of education. Men may get better educational opportunities and job training than women, so that women's position in labour market is affected by lowering their human capital and job skills.

In Turkey some labour legislation prohibits and restrains women from specific types of work. For example, according to Article 68, all types of underground and underwater work are forbidden to women. It is said that the crucial reason for this legislation is they are described as a 'men's jobs'. By the same token, women are banned from night work in industry with the exception of occupations in accordance with the regulation prepared by the Ministry of Labour (Article 69). Also, the Article 69 requires that women over 18 years of age may be employed for industrial work of a continuous nature that demands skilful handling and quickness but is not physically strenuous. The following activities are deemed to be 'industrial' and women are forbidden: printing operations, the construction and operation of gas and water works, the building, repairing, the transportation of passengers, goods and animals by land, air or water, and loading, unloading and handling of goods at railway stations, warehouses, harbours, quays and airport (Isikli, 1999).

In Turkey institutional factors are responsible for occupational segregation. Women are thought to be physically weaker than men so they must work in 'light jobs' which is labour intensive and lower paid, whereas men must be employed in 'heavy jobs' which are capital intensive and better paid. Also Ecevit (1986) argues that women are crowded in certain jobs because of the low cost of their labour, and the assumption that they are naturally appropriate to certain types of activities in work ( p. 345). Also she claims that the ideology of appropriate work for females plays a significant role in maintaining the occupational gender segregation in Turkey.

These beliefs and assumptions affect female education and on-the-job training as well. Girls are socialized to choose occupations, which are appropriate for them. Also employers do not allow women workers to benefit from on-the-job training because they think it would be waste of money because women workers would leave their job when they marry or become mothers.

Consequently, the government's protective legislations, and social and traditional thoughts and assumptions, rather than the trade unions, play a significant role in crowding women into certain jobs in Turkish case.

## **AN INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH**

The institutional theories of segmented labour market analysis claim that the neoclassical approach, especially human capital theory, cannot explain gender discrimination and its persistence in the labour market. The neoclassical theory assumes that individual workers choose their jobs freely among the expanded job selections, according to their tastes and preferences. On the other hand, the institutional theory concentrates on how group of workers encounter objectively different labour market situations, which systematically condition their tastes and restrain their wide range of actual choices for jobs (Rumberger and Carnoy, 1980; Craig, Garnsey and Rubery, 1985).

In this section, segmented labour market theories and feminist theories of gender discrimination will be discussed. The former stresses the structure of the labour market and the question of how women and men are fitted into separate divisions of the market. The latter emphasizes that the secondary position of women in the labour market and at home arises from the cultural, social and traditional factors.

### **The Segmented Labour Market Theories**

Anker and Hein (1986: 10) state that the segmented labour market theory's essential contribution is that it underlines "the existence of segmented labour markets and analyses the different ways in which different labour market segments operate, thereby providing a refined alternative to the open competition between individuals assumed in neo-classical models".

The best known theory of segmentation is the dual labour market theory which classify two types of jobs: primary sector jobs that are characterised by good working conditions, high wages, good changes of promotion, security and opportunities for advancement, and secondary sector jobs with low wages, insecure employment conditions, high turnover, and little possibility for advancement. According to this approach gender discrepancies in wages are ascribable to relatively limited access to the primary sector for women, smaller upward mobility by women from the secondary sector to the primary sector and relatively larger downward

mobility by women from the primary sector to the secondary sector.

Generally a higher proportion of women are in secondary jobs than men, and the dual labour market analysis is useful in understanding the causes and consequences of this distinction. On the other hand, this approach does not explain the further gender segregation, which definitely exists within each sector (Blau and Jusenius, 1976: 197).

The theory of dual labour market analysis has been used broadly in US and UK to explain gender segregation in the labour market (Rubery, 1978; Hakim, 1981). It is argued that this theory was primarily developed to analyse the US labour market, and that it is not easy to apply to developing countries such as Turkey on account of their different labour market conditions. According to Reich, Gordon and Edwards (1973) segmentation emerges during the conversion from competitive to monopoly capitalism, so this argument is more relevant to oligopolistic corporations. Ecevit (1986) argues that, although some Turkish authors (Makine Muhendisleri Odasi, 1977; Sonmez, 1982) claim the monopolization process has accelerated in Turkey, she believes that this is nevertheless a recent phenomenon. In Turkish industry, small firms have generally dominated for a long time, hence, the dual labour market analysis is not relevant to Turkey (Ecevit, 1986: 31).

### **Feminist Theories of Gender Discrimination**

Some authors point out that the inferior position of women in the labour market and at home are interrelated, and that social and traditional norms are responsible. Economic and social variables interact with each other to create gender segregation (Power, 1975; Anker and Hein, 1986). The most important argument in feminist theories to explain gender segregation is that "women's occupations tend to be extensions of domestic roles (e.g., teaching children, nursing, cleaning, serving), and just as women's domestic work is devalued within most societies so are these occupations and skills. Some women's jobs may not in fact be less skilled than those done by higher paid males but tend to be downgraded because mainly women have developed skills" (Anker and Hein, 1986: 14). Likewise, Power (1975) argues that when jobs are gender-typed, equal occupational opportunities are not given to women because of employers' statistical or overt discrimination, and because of

restricted expectations on women's choices imposed by family life.

This approach is very useful to demonstrate women's position in the labour market as a part of a whole social system where women are subordinate. It is implied that "although their analyses are often polemical and lack the mathematical precision of the neo-classical and segmentation theories, they are nevertheless important since they force us to think about the deeper social roots of the sex segregation in the labour market" (Anker and Hein, 1986).

In addition, as mentioned above, in Turkey, cultural social and ideological factors play a very important role to explain women's subordinate position in the labour market. In addition, the long-standing stereotypes about women's and men's aspirations, expectations from work and attachment to work affect employers' decisions on women, so that they do not want to employ female workers in male occupations which causes the gender segregation. Therefore we can say that the feminist theories of discrimination may be useful in explaining gender discrimination in Turkey.

Furthermore, there is another argument in feminist theories suggested by Reskin and Roos (1990). This is that queueing theory, as a new approach, can explain the changing occupational composition and the role of group power in maintaining occupational segregation in the labour market. Thurow (1975) was the first to use the labour queue to characterize the labour market and assumed that blacks suffered from unemployment more than whites because they were ranked by employers below whites in the labour queue. However, Reskin and Roos (1990) systematize it to clarify the uneven distribution of groups of workers across occupations or in other words, occupational segregation.

The queuing perspective emphasizes the roles of power and of conflict between groups with contradictory interests in shaping occupational composition. The factors such as custom, stereotypes, prejudices, male workers' pressure and their aspiration to preserve their advantages influence employers' ranking decision of workers. In like manner, the working conditions, autonomy, career opportunities, and gender composition influence workers' assessments of jobs. In the Reskin and Roos studies, women's inroads into the male dominated occupations during 1970s in US conform to this queueing process. When the

opportunities for mobility, earnings, and job autonomy declined in occupations such as clerical works, teacher, insurance sales, men sought better jobs elsewhere. When employers could not attract and hire enough qualified male workers, female workers entered these jobs. Although women made some progress in desegregating traditionally male occupations, when they finally achieved access to them, the occupations by then had lost most of their attraction to men. Consequently they became less advantageous for women as well. Accordingly, these factors contributed to occupational feminization. In addition, they found that, in these occupations, women were generally concentrated in the lower-paying, less desirable positions. Thus, gender desegregation in these occupations failed to diminish the wage gap between men and women.

The results that found in the study of gender discrimination in the Turkish higher education (see Kocak, 1999) are consistent with this queueing theory. When the salaries in the universities became so low, relative to other business during 1980s, some male academics resigned and sought jobs in the private sector and consequently the gender balance of the academic labour force switched towards females. Despite women's inroads into this sector recently, it has not changed their position in the academia, they are still concentrated in the lower status jobs such as specialist language instructor and translator.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study propose that wage discrimination and occupational gender segregation in the Turkish Labour market arise from the constrained labour market choices for women. Institutional barriers to their education, employment and training are responsible, rather than women's free choices in the market, as suggested by the human capital theory. Cultural and traditional stereotypes among employers and in the society as a whole about the appropriate gender characteristics for certain jobs play a very important role in the persistence of discrimination in the Turkish labour market. Therefore all these findings propose that the intervention to eliminate discrimination in Turkey is inevitable.

As gender discrimination in the Turkish market arises from lots of different sources it is necessary to address a variety of policies to remove it such as; anti-discrimination legislation and affirmative action or equal employment opportunity strategies. We believe that in Turkish case, educational

policies could have pervasive effects greater than any other policies. The impact of education is quite substantial to improve women's situation in both market and non-market areas. Because it will not only increase women's labour force participation rates and their more equal access to male-dominated occupations, but also help to reduce the discrimination against women, by changing the discriminatory social norms in the society.

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