

AS PUBLIC RELATIONSHIP APPLICATION COUNTINABILITY OF PARTICIPATED ART PROJECTS VIA DISTANCE EDUCATION METHOD: A Case of “Women’s are Meeting with Literature Project”

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ABSTRACT

Observations of artistic activities’ transformative influence in social sphere by social scientists have played an essential role in the rise of “participative art” works worldwide. Within the scope of the public relations practices performed by municipal administrations particularly in order to promote the cultural development of society, noteworthy examples of works to enable citizen’s active participation in artistic activities occur in Turkey as well. Within these practices, the project carried out by Antalya Municipality in 2009, namely “Women Meet Literature” has been designed with a view to help women who are living in disadvantageous districts build solution-driven behavior patterns instead of perceiving the difficulties in their social life particularly in their family life, as “irresolvable”. In the wake of the workshops carried out with the participation of Turkey’s famous authoresses and poetesses, it has been observed that the act of writing has a stimulating effect on women’s courage to diagnose problems.

This study evaluates, through the case of “Women Meets Literature” project as a public relations practice, the project realization process and outputs of the case regarding the use of “participative art” in mass education, within the context of ‘participative art’, ‘mass education’ and ‘public relations practices’; and it discusses the contributions of distant education to sustainability of project based public relations practices.

Keywords: Public relations, participative art, distant education, women, mass education.

INTRODUCTION

No one shall be deprived of the right of learning and education, as stated in article 42th of Turkish Constitution. The Constitution holds the state primarily responsible with the protection of this right and availability of it for all citizens. Even so, the gender discrimination reflects also in education field and women’s disadvantageous situation in enjoyment of education opportunities continues in Turkey as in many other countries worldwide.

The contribution of the efforts made to eliminate the said disparity to the reproduction of traditional patterns of behavior and perception is generally questioned within women’s studies. Educational institutions which are regarded as part of ideological state apparatuses by Althusser (2003), should be freed from the contents reproducing traditional roles especially in mass education with a view to go beyond an ordinary literacy education. The scope and contents of mass education activities for women should be designed not in reference to the given traditional roles that is ‘predisposition’, but oriented to the fields in which women are already under-represented. Although unlikely to be achieved at short notice through education policies at the macro level carried out by

national/international institutional bodies, this target can more easily be achieved at a micro level especially through projects for women education and cultural development carried out by local administrations.

Municipal administrations are formally institutional bodies as well. Women commissions mainly organized within the bodies of metropolitan municipalities are carrying out some educational projects and programs aiming at women's active participation (Demiray, 2010, 53). The success of educational projects and programs is directly proportional to their sustainability.

EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S ACCESS TO EDUCATION FACILITIES

Education, in the most general sense, is the sum of all processes to create behavioral change in line with specific goals. It is specified in two main categories, formal and informal, according to whether it is preplanned or not. Informal education does not employ any plan or predetermined place, method, technique, but occurs spontaneously in everyday life. Formal education, on the other hand, is performed by educators according to a plan, at a predetermined place with predetermined methods and techniques. Formal education is divided into two categories, namely, organized education and mass education. Organized education is carried out regularly at schools in line with education programs which are graded for specific age groups and prepared accordingly to national education policies. Mass education, however, is intended for the needs and interests of those who either have never been covered by organized education system or are already enrolled in any level of this system or have left it at any level (Fidan, 2012). Literacy courses, theatre courses, language courses and in-house trainings fall under mass education category.

The concept of education had been limited with 'school age' and 'school roof' for long years. However, since the scientific discoveries suggesting the fact that personal development continues lifelong, the said limiting approach to education has been abandoned, and education and training began to be regarded as a lifelong process. Thanks to the developing technologic means, distant education practices have become widespread; people are provided with a lifelong opportunity to receive education on their topics of interests at any time and place and to progress in their pursuits, to the extent that these technologic means are available (Demiray, 2010).

Distant education is an education method in which, "in the impossibility of in-class activities and interactions due to the boundaries of traditional teaching-learning methods, the communication and interaction between the planners and performers of the training activity and the learners are maintained via specially designed teaching units and various medias" (Alkan, 1981, 59, cited by Demiray, 2010, 66).

There is not sufficient information to determine the onset of distant education. Yet, it is known that an advert about a correspondence course of stenography was published in Boston Newspaper, in 1782. However, organized efforts for distant education were initiated during the second half of 19th century with a distant language course and a distant school for university entrance exams in Germany, and an open high school in Sweden (Kaya, 2002,27,28).

In Turkey, the idea of distant education was first brought forward during an assembly on the questions of education in 1927, the first distant education practice, however, was initiated with a correspondence course for bank officers at The Research Institute of Banking and Commercial Law of Ankara University School of Law in 1956. The Center of Correspondence Training was established in 1974 and was followed by Non-formal Higher Education Institution (Yaygın Yükseköğretim Kurumu-YAYKUR) in 1975. Within YAYKUR, open learning programs were run by the Department of Distant Education as

well as formal education programs by the Department of Formal Higher Education (Kaya, 2002, 30).

Having started via correspondence method, the distant education practices were not initially interactive, yet later thanks to technologic developments they were performed via radio, television, telephone and computer thus enhancing teacher-learner-material interaction. Today, "as well as the mentioned tool and presentation systems, also multimedia presentation systems such as e-mail, computerized conference, and internet are employed in distant education"(Kaya, 2002, 11). Interactive distant education systems are considered in two categories depending on whether they are synchronous or asynchronous. Depending on whether multi cast or unicast-broadcasting and on demand broadcasting, the interaction can occur one-to-one two way or one-to-many one way, and also one-to-many two way interaction and communication can be possible thanks to today's technology (Demiray, 2010, 78).

The Internet technologies have added a different dimension to distant education. Conceptualized as 'E-learning', this new dimension, within the scope of technologic access possibilities, has made it easier and faster to access knowledge. Therefore, distant education practices today have gained wide currency in the form of e-learning (Demiray, 2010, 76).

In systems formed to provide distant education via the internet, the predefined users are assigned roles such as participant, learner, teacher, lesson opener, system manager, and the learner-material-teacher interaction is enabled through tools such as course contents, tasks, assessments, live video streams, chat rooms and message boards, via the internet (Akdemir, 2011, 70).

The facilities enabled by distant education offers a new field and medium for public relations practices. Performing public relations projects focused on especially women's education through distant education methods will give sustainability to both the public relations practice and women's education.

Within the efforts to promote individual development and progress of women and to promote gender equality, institutional bodies and non-governmental organizations take direct actions in various ways as well as sometimes supporting existing struggles (Demiray, 2010). Among these efforts, the most significant ones are those to raise women's rate of literacy.

The opinion that the efforts for women's education should extend beyond only promoting literacy enabling women's extensive participation in social life has gained wide currency in Turkey in 2000s thanks to the efforts by several public institutions and non-governmental organizations. These efforts also have the characteristics of public relations practices pursuant to institutional supports. Usually carried out with a title "project", these works are considered within the concept of mass education practices. It is crucial to develop new methods to enhance participation in the said mass education projects, to make the project outputs attractive and to enable sustainability. In order to encourage participation in the projects, it is suggested that the attraction of the projects should be enhanced with participative art practices. Embracing contents which will support raising women's self confidence will enhance the attraction of program and projects. Perry (1988), highlights women's efforts for creating an identity other than a wife and mother (cited by McLiver and Kruger, 1993, 28). Even though the project procedures are fulfilled, the sustainability of practices is mostly interrupted because of financial and logistic inadequacies, which eventually restrains the public relations practices and mass education works within the project from achieving goals.

These inadequacies along with the barriers before women in accessing education facilities make it even more difficult to contribute women's education and cultural development (Philip, 1993). At this juncture, taking the advantage of technologic means in women's access to education may be a part of the solution.

Women's Access to Distant Education Facilities and The Advantages of Distant Education

Although education is a fundamental civil right, the accessibility of education determined with economical, cultural and spatial facilities and opportunities offered to women at each level of education are much less than those offered to men in Turkey.

Gender discrimination is the major factor for the inequality in accessing education services, having women on the disadvantaged side in Turkey as well as many other countries.

The developments in the technological dimension of education methods seem to have increased the accessibility of education facilities for women, yet still not as much as for men. Throughout the world, women follow technologic developments and benefit from information technologies less than men do (AWID, 2004, <http://www.awid.org/content/download/48799/537445/file/factsissues7.pdf>).

With regards to gender, it has been determined that distant education is enjoyed more by women (Sikora and Carroll, 2002, IV; Holmberg, 1995,12, cited by Demiray, 2010, 117). The data put forth by Sugur and Savran's study in 2006 suggest that open education system is preferred more by women who were unable to continue their education due to various responsibilities such as marriage, childcare (2006,208). Stressing distant education's important function in women's education, Demiray (2010) claims that women can not sufficiently enjoy organized education facilities due to space and time limitations, resource shortage, and their heavy domestic responsibilities relatively to men's. The idea that women can be reached at their houses, providing them with the opportunity to resume their education and improve themselves through distant education system, seems functional (Demiray, 2010, ix, x; Ramdoo, 2005).

However, 'the digital division', namely the inequalities in accessing information and communication technologies and internet use, significantly appears between gender groups as well as countries, regions and socioeconomic groups (Sugur, Savran, 2006, 213). At this juncture, we should note that, also, level of education, age and cultural context are among the barriers before women's access distant education (Evans, 1995). For women, technologic and financial barriers stand before access to distant education too. Sometimes technophobe or high computer prices may constitute problems for women (Eshelman, 1997, cited by Demiray, 2010, 114).

The concerns that giving place to elements reproducing gender discrimination in the contents of both formal and informal education (such as illustrating traditional domestic roles in textbooks) will help reproducing the traditional domestic roles, are being raised within women studies (Jenkins, 1979). At this point, Jenkins (1979) points out that changing sexist attitudes adopted in education policies are much more crucial than developing education technologies (159). The same concerns inevitably rise for the contents of distant education too: in the scope of distant education, "can this process come to mean, in the course of time, women's emancipation from the mangle of patriarchy? The answer is to be determined by women's initiative and will to become subject in the face of patriarchal restrictions" (Sugur, Savran, 2006, 215).

Strengthening women's initiative to become individuals requires developing programs and projects to lead women to the social fields which they are under-represented, as well

as a solid struggle against the sexist elements in education contents besides many other fields. In this respect, all fields to which gender inequality reflects are equally important.

Gender Inequality

as The Source of Women's Disadvantaged Status in the Field of Education Field Turkey

In Turkey –besides many other countries- the major reason of educational inequalities is gender inequality. Traditional sexist attitudes take away women's opportunities to participate in social life, to engage in gainful occupation, to self fulfillment and self expression and thus to become active individuals demanding social rights (Wai-Yee, 2002). "In spite of the rise of the level of education by years, special social policies for women, particularly adult women who are the most disadvantaged, to access education facilities were not developed until the end of 1990s. Women's access to these education facilities was mostly limited with their families' possibilities and choices. In this period, gender factors were as prominent as economic factors" (Sallan Gul, Alican, Dinek, 2008, 75).

Included in The Beijing Action Plan and The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) to which Turkey is a party, the statement highlighting the necessity of "placing particular importance to education as one of the fields to eliminate traditional approaches and legal statutes restraining women's fundamental rights and freedoms in economic, political, social and cultural life", places particular emphasis on social and cultural fields, underlining that education policies for women must go beyond ordinary literacy works.

Within CEDAW's recommendations on adult's enjoyment from education opportunities, the element "lifelong education" is also included, which offers an approach to extend the scope of education programs for adults. CEDAW's General Recommendation No. 27 adopted in the forty-seventh session on Older Women and Protection of Their Human Rights states that "parties have an obligation to ensure equality of opportunity in the field of education for women of all ages and to ensure that older women have access to adult education and lifelong learning opportunities as well as to the educational information they need for their well-being and that of their families."

When considered as a whole, CEDAW can be said to be initiated with a view to eliminate discriminative practices led by gender based stereotypical prejudices and traditional attitudes so as to assure gender equality in all fields of social life. The TBMM Committee on Equality of Opportunity for Women and Men in its (2012) report titled 'Constitution from the Point of Gender', states that Turkey has signed CEDAW Convention in 1985, and that the convention, promulgated in 1986, is the only legal and obligatory document against gender discrimination in the country. Turkey has taken part in The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, held with the participation of 189 countries, and accepted the platform for action without any reservation.

In spite of the efforts in line with the conventions, declarations and action plans which have been participated and signed against gender discrimination, it is ranked 124th among 135 countries in World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report. This shows that public sphere in Turkey is still dominated by men. "... women have been embarking on hard struggles to enhance their social status as they appear more and more in work life, and by extension, taking part in public sphere dominated by men, during the period from the industrial revolution to today. They have achieved significant gains throughout this period. Yet, today it is impossible to say that women and men have equal conditions in equally sharing the social domain. Although women has achieved significant gains in this sense, the social domain is still being reproduced as a domain which is dominated by men and in which women are subordinated" (Kuzgun, Sevim, 2004, 15).

Gender discrimination has its origins in gender-based domestic division of labor (Hartman, 1994, 173-174). This fact arises from the division of private sphere (family/domestic sphere) and public sphere (outdoor sphere such as policy making, economy and education) in such a way that there is a contrast and hierarchy between them. The division of private sphere and public sphere does not arise from the duties and responsibilities that men undertake in public sphere which is socially more visible. Rather it arises from the expectations that women should undertake duties and responsibilities primarily in private sphere (in family). Men's responsibilities in private sphere are more abstract than women's and they are mainly related to tasks requiring less physical labor. The fact that women's domestic labor is unpaid annihilates the labor's value. Men, thanks to their roles in public sphere and the wage and esteem they earn in return to their labor, are regarded an authority as a paterfamilias over all family members including wife. The way of organization of private sphere promotes men's participation in public sphere while hindering women', as Bora (2004) states. Even though women can gain opportunity to participate in public sphere in the course of time, Integrated with private sphere they cannot free themselves from the imposed responsibilities of private sphere, and women's private sphere is regarded less valuable. This arises from "a patriarchy based exploitation relationship," Wallby (2002) remarks.

At this point, it is important that the works to promote gender equality and to eliminate gender discrimination against women must employ an approach that regard and position women as individuals. The Article 10 of CEDAW proposes an integrated and enhanced education and new types of education developed. The Beijing Action Plan highlights informal learning, for example through volunteer activities, within the concept of 'lifelong learning', and places an emphasis on measures to be taken in order to enable women access and participate in fields in which they are under-represented (Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: <http://www.tbmm.gov.tr/komisyon/kefe/docs/pekin.pdf>, 24,28).

Educational campaigns in Turkey have generally focused on lifting the rate of literacy. However, education also provides people with the strengthening tools to make individual into an active subject and to develop society (Tan, 2000). Women must free themselves from their given status in order to become an active subject. Therefore, the most important step to be taken is to abandon education and training programs and projects which bring along reproduction of the given gender roles (Everts, 1998, 22, cited by Kanwar, 1999, 351).

SOCIAL INFLUENCE OF ART AND AN EXAMPLE OF PARTICIPATIVE ART AS A PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE: Women Meet Literature Project

Employing participative art in education programs for adult women should be considered as an approach to be adopted in actualizing the decisions taken within CEDAW and PEP (see CEDAW Article 10). Art is one of those fields in which women are under-represented. In line with their gender roles, women make their presence felt mostly in dexterity based fields of art. Many projects for women's education are carried out in the scope of handicrafts (mostly knitting, embroidering, fabric/object painting). This approach has an intensifying effect on gender roles. However literary arts can provide women with fields to reveal their individual activities and to go beyond their traditional roles. Although the extent and character of art's transformative influences are debated, employing artistic contents in women's education projects can make attraction.

Observations of artistic activities' transformative influence in social sphere by social scientists have played an essential role in the rise of participative art works worldwide. Starting from the assumption that art has social influence, we should first agree on what art corresponds to, determine whether 'auditing art' or 'actively participating in art' is

meant with 'participation in art' (Guetzkow, 2002). Matarossi (1997) states that, the proofs generally indicates that participation in art makes extensive contribution to people's well-being by providing them with several personal benefits such as rise in confidence, rich social networks or knowledge and skill acquisition. Social studies of the last 15 years (e.g. in fields of social capital and welfare) tend to verify this argument, Matarossi'nin (2010) states, while his studies are criticized) in conceptual and procedural respects by Merli (2004) who remarks that social/participative art cannot be expected to lead up to such an extensive social transformation.

Merli's criticism on Matrossi has a realistic aspect. Certainly, art's transformative influence on social life can be observed in another study. However it must be put that expecting great social transformation from artistic participation as Matorassi suggests, is quite an assertive approach. We should settle for the vision that artistic participation can only have an encouraging effect on the participants, and participative art can only make an intellectual contribution to the field/topic of an existing struggle (e.g. to a campaign for raising awareness of women's problems).

The works of public institutions and non-governmental organizations employing participative art as a tool in their projects which can give evidence for the aforesaid vision should be observed. Within the scope of responsibilities of non-governmental organizations and municipal administrations to promote the cultural development of society, noteworthy examples of works to enable citizen's active participation in artistic activities occur in Turkey as well.

Within these practices, the project carried out by Antalya Municipality in 2009, namely "Women Meet Literature" has been designed with a view to help women who are living in disadvantageous districts, build solution-driven behavior patterns instead of perceiving the difficulties in their social life particularly in their family life, as 'irresolvable'. The municipality has carried out a public relations project including face-to-face communication with 120 participating women. The project has appeared 25 times in local and 4 times in regional press as a news item, as well as being a program topic two times in local and one time in national TVs. With this respect, it should be considered as a public relations practice in both local and national scales. Moreover, the logo of the project has won "Best of World" prize in 'Worldwide Logo Design Annual' (WOLDA) which is one of the leading graphic design contests of the world, and thus carried its public relations aspect to an international scale (www.wolda.org).

The project titled 'Women Meet Literature' has been initiated with the leadership of the country's prominent authoresses and poetesses, in November 2009, in Antalya.

The project has been designed considering the expectation that literature can play a role in developing problem diagnosing and solving skills as revealed in a similar project carried out in Kastamonu before. The project was based on particularly the participation of those women who are residing in disadvantaged districts, and therefore it was carried out in Kepez district which meets most the definition of 'disadvantaged district'. To design an educational and encouraging training for women to express themselves, their problems, hopes, fears, by writing, and thus to raise their awareness on their capabilities, was set as the goal of the project. This three-day activity with training first two days and practice the third day, was announced free for all women. It was also announced, through leaflets, billboards and press releases, that the first 100 applicants will be included in the project, as well as the information about the authoresses and poetesses to take part in the project and offer their experiences. The table of the participant women's occupational status shows that unpaid domestic workers rank first among all participants.

Table: 1
Occupational Status of the Women Participating in
“Women Meet Literature Project”

| Occupational status of participant women | N | % |
|--|----|-------|
| Unpaid domestic worker | 40 | 43,5 |
| Student | 5 | 5,4 |
| Worker | 33 | 35,9 |
| Retired | 14 | 15,2 |
| Total | 92 | 100,0 |

10 of the women whose works are included in the book have preferred to use alias instead of real names, and 8 have refused to give information about their occupational status. Within the project, seven prominent authoresses and poetesses of Turkey have given training by offering experiences to the participant women, and consequent to the three-day workshop the act of writing has been observed to have an encouraging influence on women in problem diagnosing.

The observations held during the project are also supported by the content analysis of the texts written by participant women within this practice.

METHOD

Women Meet Literature Project has been carried out with the participation of 120 women from various socio-economic and cultural groups, most in disadvantage conditions and all living in Antalya, as well as 7 volunteer authoresses/poetesses.

100 texts selected from those written by the trainee women participants, have been collected in a book titled “WriteAntalya from Hundred Pens” (Taskaya, Sert, Tariman, 2010). This study carries out an analysis of common metaphors and points used in texts by women with respect to problem diagnosing, by use of methods of content and critical discourse analysis.

Content analysis is a method searching for social reality by making inferences on latent content by acquiring systematic data from the manifest content of social reality reflected in the text contents (Berger, 1996, 104; Gokce, 1995, 24).

Critical discourse analysis is based on the assumption that language has a dialectical relation with all other components of social life (Ozdemir, 2010). Therefore, discourse analysis examines discourse relatedly with other social, cognitive, political and cultural processes, and searches how power relations, values, ideologies and identities underlying the discourse transforms into linguistic constructs (Van Dijk, 1998).

In the book, the texts featuring ‘problem diagnosing’ on gender inequality basis are categorized, by use of content analysis, with regard to whether they contain common metaphors and conceptual points, and evaluated by use of critical discourse analysis. In content and discourse analysis of the texts, gender based presentations of the problems are focused.

In the texts covered by the scope of this study, the source of the problems diagnosed by women corresponds to a social plain. The emphasis on “being a woman” which prevails in the texts manifests that women make reference to gender issues in diagnosing problems.

For this reason, in content analysis of the texts, gender based presentations of the problems are focused. "...gender is becoming an important analytical tool to understand the relations both in family and in institutions not related with family, and also it is becoming, in a sense, a touchstone to determine these relations. ...

Gender offers an insight to understand social relations, which brings along a better understanding of concepts such as ideology, power and social classes. Also, this point of view gives clues in understanding how the prevailing types in family and society are reproduced" (Dedeoglu, 2000, 141, 143).

32 percent of the texts written by women make reference to gender issues in diagnosing problems. About one third of all texts contain significant metaphoric expressions. "In metaphoric thinking employs –although abstractly- somehow made explicit comparisons through which required resemblances are constructed. Metaphoric thinking works by linking conceptions on different abstraction levels..." (Teoman, 2003, 58). This can be regarded as an expression of causal linking skills. The texts which indicate gender based discrimination causatively and include metaphorical and conceptual expressions, have been analyzed on the basis of common metaphors and common points within this study.

ANALYSIS and EVALUATIONS

The following table shows common metaphoric expressions and conceptual points in sentence-based texts, as well as their discourse analysis.

Content Categories and Discourse Analysis of Metaphoric and Conceptual Expressions Used in Diagnosing Gender Based Problems in the Texts by Participants

Table: 2
Content categories and discourse analysis of metaphoric and conceptual expressions used in diagnosing gender based problems in the texts (Taşkaya, Tariman, Sert:2009) written by the participants of "Women Meet Literature Project"

| No | Writer | Phrases | Discourse analysis |
|----|--|--|--|
| 1 | Çiçek Subasi 1986/ Accountant | "I'm a girl, holding my tongue as I was taught" (Taskaya, et.al., 2010, 56) | Within the gender based traditional behavior patterns, women are imposed to keep quiet and the traditional view of women is argued the basis of the suffered problems. The traditional item "trousseau" which is identified with woman refers to home; and in the texts women identify home with "cage". What is pointed with the terms "cage", "quietness" and "not speaking", are being jailed, being disabled to join life, and the "speechlessness" in the face of them. |
| 2 | Merih Nesrin Yalcin 1957/ Pharmacist | "We were born women, posterity stopped.... They shot honor, left us. Yet we covered ourselves and became 'pure'. We just remained <i>living quietly</i> ." (op.cit,107). | |
| 3 | Petek S. Dulun 1984/ Sales rep | "Life was running fast and she was just watching it behind a window, unable to join in it. Men make houses women make homes, her mother said. However she hadn't made her home herself but put in this <i>cage</i> "house" as a canary bought from a pet shop. She kept a 'quiet' girl as she was taught. They gave her wire, along with the power to decide for her, to the husband's hands, even in front of her eyes. She closed her eyes. <i>Kept quiet</i> ." (op.cit,132). | |
| 4 | Suna Caglayan 1976/ Sculptress | "I took the tambour that summer. Behind that tambour, I felt myself slender like that silk cloth. ...My mom said, one day, you will prepare the | In all five texts, the necessity of behaving in line with the gender based behavior patterns are |

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| | | trousseaus, yours and your sister's... TROUSSEAU . I felt as a prisoner then ... as if this feeling took root inside me, as if I was a free bird suddenly jailed in a <u>cage</u> ." (op.cit,142). | described with the "cage" metaphor which symbolizes speechlessness and the obligation to stay in the house. |
| 5 | Oznur Gaydanoglu 1958/ Painter | "She had a kin marriage and god gave her a baby... But she cannot take her baby in her lap in front of her uncle, her father in law I mean. She <u>neither speaks with her husband</u> , nor deals with her baby, <u>nor speaks with her mother</u> in front of her father in law... Lives sacrificed on the altar of respect" (op.cit,127). | |
| 6 | Meryem Nart 1976/ Underwriter | "The young assistant in the photographer's shop realized that the bride's veil is missing. 'Excuse me, your veil, why haven't you worn your veil?' Fidan slightly smiled, and a sentence getting out of her mouth summarized her life: " <u>My veil is put on my widowhood</u> " (op.cit,109). | The expression that a woman's second marriage is less estimable than the first is presented with the metaphor "veil put on widowhood". The effect of social pressure in regarding womanliness as "dirtiness is expressed with the metaphor "dirty vest". |
| 7 | Nurgul Yeni 1990/ Student | "What if my father hears, she says, what if my brother sees... what if the woman next door tells my mother... Are you too dressed with womanliness as <u>a dirty vest</u> " (op.cit:120). | The gender based traditional morals suggesting that women can leave her family home only by getting married and can get back there only if she dies, is expressed with the metaphor "cerement". |
| 8 | Dudu Sari 1979/ Unpaid domestic worker | "Do brides always wear white, I think. White; snow is white, clouds are white, hopes are white, <u>cerement is white!</u> But in our homeland, once you are a bride, you can never go back to your family house again. Ayşe wails: have I <u>married or martyred</u> " (op.cit, 59). | In all three texts, the fact that women's honor is determined by others is described with metaphors symbolizing dresses cut by others. |
| 9 | Alias: Kader (destiny) | "So, this is my <u>destiny</u> , I was saying. Because neither my family nor kith and kin would believe me and think I was bad, if I went back to my family home. Because once I was out there is no turn back." (op.cit, 163). | |
| 10 | Hatice Korkmaz 1951/ Unpaid domestic worker | "I finished primary school. Wanted to continue my education, but my father said, I didn't let your aunt so I can't let you too. Not because I don't want but it would be unfair to her. And I accepted my <u>destiny</u> and didn't stand up" (op.cit, 90). | The discourses in these 15 texts written by women take girls' deprivation from education with a learned helplessness, and accept it as "destiny". They express that these depriving barriers hurt their individualities. The common stress of all texts is of "womanliness". They state that women are mostly not aware of their social rights and keep behaving fittingly with the traditional impositions of male-dominant society. They emphasize that being born as a woman means having to lead a restricted life under men's dominance. The displeasure of mother for giving birth to a girl is regarded as the reflection of the traditional perception of women. In all 15 texts, being a woman is expressed with "pain", "problem", "being left incomplete", "penalty", "fault", and "destiny". |
| 11 | Emine Onal 1952/ Unpaid domestic worker | "I was one of five children of a poor villager family. My father didn't let us go to school, but almost all my peers went. One day, father said, Emine, I am giving you in marriage to a nice man. I said no, I want to go to school. But eventually <u>what my father said was done</u> , I married. (op.cit,62). | |
| 12 | Hatice Boyaci 1961/ Unpaid domestic worker | "I finished first school with success. I wanted to go secondary school but my father didn't enroll me in school, I cried over spilled milk, in vain. My mother was on his side too, saying, girls shall not go to school, what is there to learn? We will anyway give you in marriage in a couple of years, and then your husband will take care of you... I didn't want to be a bride, I wanted to go to school and then be a teacher, but <u>what my parents said was done</u> . (op.cit,88). | |
| 13 | Medine Karatepe/ Unpaid domestic worker | "Mom, <u>you didn't allow</u> me learn how to read and write <u>when I was little</u> , now I am angry with you for this. I am going to a literacy course now but <u>I can't pick up</u> ." (op.cit,106). | |
| 14 | Urkiye Saglam 1949/ Unpaid domestic worker | "I couldn't go to school because <u>they didn't want girls get education</u> . This remained a bleeding wound inside me for years... And after getting married and having children, it is even more impossible to get | |

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| | | education now." (op.cit,153). | |
| 15 | Sahizer Kok/ Unpaid domestic worker | "I am an adult woman now. I know how to read and write. ...you used us as slaves, grudged us even first school. I am sending my children to school, now girls can go to school as boys. I do not <i>segregate children from one another</i> . Well, this is a little accusing. But it is all right, I poured my heart out, partly. Still, excuse me." (op.cit,147). | |
| 16 | Halime Fidan 1978/ Private security officer | "I opened my eyes to my world, to <i>my shell</i> , with complaints why it is a girl, not a boy. I bend my knees, dropped my head, didn't ever respond back to my brother. Why mom?... Why did you <i>bore me a gir?</i> " (op.cit,84). | |
| 17 | Nuriye Yucel 1963/ Unpaid domestic worker | "My aunt was doing midwifery while my mother was giving birth to me. When I came out she said to my aunt, sister, <i>don't cut her cord, and let her die</i> . I was thirty when I learnt this." (op.cit,121). | |
| 18 | Alias: Lady Rose | " ... and my daughter was born. I remember myself crying when she was born. The penalty of being a woman was severely paid, in this country." (op.cit,170). | |
| 19 | Alias: Autumn | "I am a woman, feeling a pain deep inside Still having hope, I am a woman Sorrow of years inside me, <i>left at the threshold</i> Once I have been <i>left incomplete</i> , doubts are everywhere." (op.cit,167). | |
| 20 | Fevziye Arslan 1984/ Garment modeler | "And school is over now, the girl won't go to school any more, she didn't will this but it is over... her future is taken away from her, she is growing up without realizing this. She has peers, also girls, also won't go to school... <i>Her only fault is perhaps BEING A WOMAN</i> " (op.cit,76). | |
| 21 | Zeynep Cigdem Rona 1980/ Cashier | "... they defamed her honor and pride, even though she was innocent, she was <i>guilty for being a woman</i> . <i>Vultures</i> were all chasing a piece of meat. This little girl would either <i>fall prey</i> to one of them or depart this life. (op.cit,157). | |
| 22 | Gul Demirel 1963/ Unpaid domestic worker | ".... Our <i>women who thinks being exploited is a fate..</i> Women who fall <i>victim</i> to ignorance and lack of education, or rather we, falling <i>victim</i> to patriarchal traditions" (op.cit,81). | |
| 23 | Fatma Akgul 1968/ Unpaid domestic worker | "Zeyno desperately said, 'I can't upset my family, I can't elope. I shall just accept my <i>destiny</i> '. Ill starred Zeyno threw all those <i>stars</i> she was collecting at nights, back into the darkness... It was her <i>destiny</i> , not written by herself, but others" (op.cit, 68). | |
| 24 | Kamile Yilmaz 1948/ Retired teacher | "My beloved man was the best on earth, I thought. He was just perfect... I had divinized him. And I never realized that, chasing after him I was <i>getting less, getting lost</i> . (op.cit, 97). | The dominant manner of men in love-based relationships may cause depersonalization and "character erosion" in women. It is stated that, gender-based roles confine women in a situation in which they have to sacrifice themselves for their families, which brings along "loss of personality" and "senselessness" for women. It is also stated that, (exposed or witnessed) violence against women may cause deep traumas in girls. In 7 of the texts written by women, the sharpness of gender-based roles and violence is expressed through the concepts of |
| 25 | Nigar Bacalan 1957/ Retired | " <i>I strived for them</i> as much as I could, even at the cost of sacrificing myself. Now, after all those years, I come to my senses, thanks to this event. I want to repeat, this is <i>the first time</i> after long years that <i>I am doing something for myself</i> " (op.cit, 116). | |
| 26 | Alias: Herbst | "Time is slipping by. Days come after days, and every day is the same for me. Get up early every morning, awaken children, prepare breakfast. Clean up every day, cook for lunch, do shopping... I want something change in my life (op.cit,166). | |
| 27 | Sirin Sehri Taban 1962/ Unpaid domestic worker | "Life cuts off, carves, calluses; because we have various roles to play... Each role we can't get through <i>becomes a stone tied to our feet</i> " (op.cit,151) | |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|----|--|--|--|
| 28 | Lutfiye Tanrikulu 1971/ Unpaid domestic worker | "I am 38 now and I can't get free from my past. ... My childhood memories are full of bad thing my father did. He <u>cheated on my mother</u> with another woman. ...I used to wait for him on the window with my mother" (op.cit, 103). | "character erosion", "loss of personality", "senselessness" and "trauma". |
| 29 | Fatos Sahinkaya 1949/ Retired teacher | "I love purple, but in the rainbow, not <u>on my body</u> " (op.cit, 75). | |
| 30 | Perihan Gokay 1968/ Tourism | "I was just 15 when I was <u>given in marriage to someone against my will</u> . And I was <u>first exposed to violence</u> only one month later" (op.cit, 130). | |
| 31 | Oznur Dumlu 1964/ Management | "I was quite older when I first learnt that babies don't come out from the belly button. ...I wouldn't run into the arms of the first man to say he loved me. I wouldn't think if one kisses me, someone else won't accept me" (op.cit,127) | In both two texts written by women, the inward reflection of the problems caused by traditional behavior patterns in sexual education and parent-child relations, is expressed with "regret", and the imposition of traditional attitudes under the name of "respect" is questioned. The traditional "distance keeping" behavior which prevail in family relationships is perceived as lovelessness. In both texts, the traditional behavior pattern which prevails in family relationships is expressed with "ignorance", "lovelessness", and "distance". |
| 32 | Alias: Woman After Love | "My father's love was painful for us. Now my children experience the same. My husband shows no tolerance to children. Was it so difficult to show love, father? He gave us only pain instead of love. We saw no love of him. I would like to embrace him, kiss him to my heart's content, but I couldn't. " (op.cit, 168). | |

In the texts by participant women, the emphasis on "being a woman" centered in the expressions for problem diagnosing, manifests that they diagnose problems over gender inequality.

Differently from the biological dichotomy between men and women, gender comprises socially learned expectations and behaviors differentiating between masculine and feminine.

Gender based social roles are tried to be justified with stereotyped judgments based on traditional norms and values, by the agents of the system which produce these roles (Demiray, 2009). Human beings learn how to be man and woman in order to assume the identities of man and woman, through culturally-determined socialization. "One is born as girl or boy, becomes woman or man," Aganski (1998, 15) says.

According to the data represented in the table, women have remarked, in relation to problem diagnosing, that girls are being restrained from continuing their education due to the gender-based traditional approach. The remark that tradition referenced social opinion is the source of problems, prevail as an approach in many of the texts. Women have emphasized the intensifying role of gender inequality with metaphors and expressions such as "keeping quiet", "destiny", "shell", "stopped posterity", "bride without a veil", "dirty vest", "cage", "falling prey". Gender discrimination implied through the metaphors used, has often been mentioned.

The liberating and sense-of-self-vivifying effects of literature, as a field of art, in the practices of use of participative art in mass education for women, have been evaluated through a content and discourse analysis of the metaphoric expressions used in the texts by women, and presented in the table below.

Content Categories and Discourse Analysis of Metaphoric and Conceptual Expressions for "Expressing by Writing" in the Texts by Participants

Table: 3

Content categories and discourse analysis of metaphoric and conceptual expressions for "Expressing by Writing" in the texts by participants of "Women Meet Literature Project"

| No | Writer | Phrase/Phrases | Discourse analysis |
|----|---|--|--|
| 1 | <i>Çiçek Subaşı 1986/ Accountant</i> | "A pen falls into my shaking hands. Then only I exist, with my mute tongue and my tiny hands beginning to hold a pen. I start talking. I tell those I can't tell with my tongue now. Hey folks, <i>count me in, I am here too</i> " (Taskaya, et.al., 2010, 56). | In all 7 texts written by women, the act of writing is identified with "existence" in relation to expressing thoughts which cannot be spoken out, and described as a weapon with the metaphor "sword", in the struggle to "survive" |
| 2 | <i>Nigar Bacalan 1957/ Retired</i> | "I have been thinking for this three days, that I haven't lived myself before. This event brought me to my senses. I do not know how to conclude. I want to cry out to life, with my pen and paper, <i>"count me in, I'm gonna enjoy living too"</i> , and I'll just do it" (op.cit,116) | In these 7 texts by women, the thoughts that act of writing liberates women and gives life to thoughts, and that writing takes its strength from its persistency, are reflected with the terms "freedom", "flying", "existence" and "encouraging". |
| 3 | <i>Halime Fidan 1978/Private security officer</i> | "Do not take away my sword, let me write and fill white sheets... Let me deflower the virginity of snow white sheets. I am drunk, flying even before my first bends" (op.cit,84) | |
| 4 | <i>Saliha Acıgoz 1952 /Unpaid domestic worker</i> | "Writing is freedom... Giving life to what you think, eternizing what you experience... Writing, being able to write is the loveliest thing" (op.cit,134) | |
| 5 | <i>Zeynep Tunc1987/ Student</i> | "I'm so weak that I can't even write a diary. That's why I came here to listen to you. I wonder what you all felt while writing, or rather beginning writing. After all, <i>with you I started to write my diary again</i> " (op.cit,159) | |
| 6 | <i>Fatma Kayım 1972/ Electronic technician</i> | "What I have seen here is that if all these women were helped and provided with some facilities, god knows how many of them would be <i>authoresses</i> " (op.cit:70). | |
| 7 | <i>Sengül Sentürk 1952/Retired teacher</i> | "For they are all <i>engaged in writing with your encouragement</i> ... For I see their motivation and determination... For I am <i>flying the butterfly inside</i> Aunt Rukiye... Here I am happy!" (op.cit,148). | |

In the texts by participant women, the expressions of "existence", "freedom", "courage", "sword", "excitement", "possibility", "new beginning", "fly" centered on implying the act of writing, are metaphors and expressions to point out individuality and freedom.

"Writing" as an important tool to express themselves, also creates a field for women for self fulfillment.

During the workshops held before the act of writing, the opinion and experience sharing of women on several subjects has created a stimulating effect on them. The same effect has also been observed by Lawlor during a research on distant education through online communication. Women have said, in a higher incidence than men, that reading others' comments on a subject helps them make up their opinion (Lawlor, 2006, 38). The difference between the socialization processes of men and women also influences their ways of using social media. Brunner (1991) suggests that, women use new media technologies as a tool for contacting, communicating and cooperating with others, while men tend to regard this medium as extensions of power on physical environment (138).

Evaluation of the Use of Participative Art in Mass Education as a

Public Relations Practice and the Contribution of Distant Education to the Sustainability of Public Relations Practices and Projects

The projects employing participative art in their programs, such as Women Meet Literature Project, are encouraging and stimulating projects especially for women's enjoyment of lifelong education. Therefore, lifelong education facilities and any efforts to extend and popularize them must be supported and promoted by policy makers and nongovernmental organizations.

The said efforts, may give municipalities, in a local level, opportunities to meet with people. The signs of social sensitivity exhibited in public relations practices by national and local administrations, are respected in the scope of social conscience, by citizens.

Encouraging people's active participation in public relations practices in the process of raising social awareness, will provide the public relations practices, which are mostly deviated from the aim and turned into a show, with an "operational"/"action-oriented" and "sincere" character. Because, -sincerity based- credibility in public relations practices is the key for success (Kazanci, 2002, 235).

Kazanci, points out those public relations practices are activities bearing a social content, beyond making the organization look good to public, or polishing its image (Kazanci, 2002, 100). "...in pluralist societies in which different power centers occur, and different interests are represented, organizations must present acceptable justifications for their existence and tell what they give to the society while chasing their interests (Biber, 2009,141).

One of the ways to free public relations from the "metalanguage", that degrades the social groups directly suffering from social problems, into the beneficiary of the solution, is to enable these social groups' active participation in the practices in order to be a part of solution.

Active participation of disadvantaged groups in the works, projects and programs carried out for solution or awareness raising, will take these groups away from the way of public relations, which otherize them (Merli, 2004) already in the beginning, and pave another way for new trends for more humane practices. Because, only turning towards practices away from the modernist approach that determines the ways of liberation of those who suffer from social problems from above, without counting them in the solution process, can save public relations from being just a "show".

Sustainability is a touchstone for success in public relations as it is in all other fields. Even though they do not directly fall under their duties and responsibilities, several organizations are carrying out mass education projects within public relations practices to contribute the solution of social problems. Sustainability will give these projects and thus this kind of public relations practices a distinctive character from those practices which only concern about their "media coverage".

Distant education's contribution to sustainability of this kind of projects is another important topic. Employing technologic means of mass education in these projects will enable the project executors reach relatively large masses and incorporate them into the process. (see for details Hafford-Letchfield, Leonard, Couchman, 2012: 689). The mass education programs carried out for women's access to education, are lodestars for the sustainability of projects and programs employing participative art in mass education. Smith suggests that distant training programs can be made more effective through independent learners if it is organized flexibly (Smith, 2001, cited by Goru, 2011). Flexible learning is flexible for the learner, in starting training time, selecting the level of the course, determining the place and time of the training, in determining the speed of

training, in forming the surrounding for training, in deciding the help to take for training, in enjoying information technologies... in being tested on what learner (Race, 1998, cited by Goru, 2011). Facilities to be created within flexible learning approach can support the sustainability of project and programs employing participative arts in mass education. However, it must be always considered that the accessibility of information technologies is a determinant at this point.

For the environments with sufficient access to information technologies, use of social media for learning, as a distant training method, can be employed in mass education projects centered on participative art. Distant education has undergone several changes from simple print-based communication to WEB 2.0 strategies (Demiray & Sharma, 2008, 186). These changes have significantly developed the coverage and scope of distant education opportunities.

RESULTS

The fact that we didn't have any data about the participant women's problem diagnosing skills before the project has made it impossible to infer whether they made any progress as a result of the project. However it is understood from the content analysis of the texts written by participant women that, enjoyment of women from mass education facilities within projects employing participative art strengthens sense of self, stimulates will and courage to question, activates communicating skills while diagnosing the problems based on gender discrimination.

The use of new media technologies in improving particularly written expressing abilities of the active participants of participative and projects, are regarded as a new method for distant education. The implementation of participative art based projects via distant education methods also enables the communication between women from different geographic, ethnic, cultural, economic roots. And this makes up an environment in which women can handle the common problems they encounter with, and help each other change their understandings on a macro and micro level (Trivedi, 1989, 21).

A platform to be formed through social networks on the internet for the sustainability of the project activities and thus the public relations practice will serve the purpose of the use of this new method within distant education.

RECOMENDATIONS

Cox, Clark, Heath and Plumpton, in a research among the participants of a video conference which is a distant education method, have found that women show more success, participation, and commitment than men do (Cox, Clark, Heath and Plumpton, 2002, cited by Lawlor, 2006, 39). It is widely accepted that the main reason for women's higher tendency for enjoyment from distant education facilities than men's is their privation from organized education facilities (see for details, Zembylas, 2008, 73). This consideration supports the aspect that distant education creates opportunity for women's access to education and cultural development facilities. The use of distant education methods in sustainability of program and projects designed with a gender-free scope and content, will provide an opportunity, particularly for participant women, to permanently use and deepen the experience they gained during the project. Also, announcing to public, through public relations activities, the projects which offer women the opportunity to express themselves thank to distant education facilities, will encourage other women make use of distant education. (Kanwar, 1999, 351).

Maintaining the continuity, by means of distant education, of the act of writing by women who have been stimulated to write through participative art projects, will make public

relations practices carried out through participative art projects, sustainable. The increasingly extensive use of new media in the field of public relations and publicity, will serve the purpose of announcing to large masses public relations practices particularly which are designed with an interdisciplinary approach.

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