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Gendered aspects of career development experiences of university professors in Turkey

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'Gendered aspects of career development experiences of university professors in Turkey'

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This paper examines the gendered nature of the career development of university professors in Turkey, where 23 per cent of professors are women. This proportion is much higher than in Western Europe generally and therefore Turkey provides an important example of women's experiences at professorial levels in academic institutions. The paper shows how historical, political, social and educational policies and institutional dynamics inter-relate to shape senior men and women's experiences.

I Introduction

Academic employment is considered to offer elite forms of career in every country. Although the social status attached to academic work is universally recognised, research publications on academic employment have identified that women academics continue to experience employment discrimination in the United Kingdom (Bett 1999; Ledwith and Manfredi 1999; Farish et al. 1995; Heward and Taylor 1992), in wider Europe (David and Woodward 1998), Middle East (Arabsheibani 1990; Toren and Kraus 1987), Australia (Shoemark 1996; Burton 1996) and the North America (Konrad and Pfeffer 1991). Similarly, in Turkey Acar (1998 1993 and 1983), ÖSYM (1981 and 1979) and Neusel (1994) have pointed out that sex segregation was ripe in the higher education sector. However, based on international comparisons, they also highlighted unprecedented improvements in women's representation across the sector. They, for example, noted that the proportion of women academics in Turkey has increased from 19 per cent in 1960 (Acar 1998) to 34.6 per cent in 1999 (ÖSYM 1999). There were 7,832 professors in Turkish universities in 1999 of whom 22.9 per cent were women; this proportion gradually increased from only 15 per cent in the 1980s (Doğanramacı 1993). Acar (1998) articulated that this improvement in the numerical representation of academic women was set to continue into the 21st century. Furthermore, Woodward and Özbilgin (1998) identified that the numerical representation of women

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academics, and professors in particular, in Turkey was better than that of academic women in other European countries in the 1990s. It was also pointed out that while the discrepancy between the literacy rates and basic educational standards of sexes is so acutely visible in Turkey, improving representation of women in academic employment could be viewed as 'paradoxical' (Acar 1998).

Several researchers have attempted to explain the relatively favourable representation of Turkish women in professional positions in comparison to their counterparts in other European countries (Özgüç 1998; Kandiyoti 1997; Neusel 1994). They argued that improved representation of women academics could be mainly attributed to three main socio-economic factors. First, it was noted that the state was supportive of women's inclusion in academic employment. The state policies are closely associated with the Kemalist principles of republican secularism which upheld for over 75 years the value of sex equality over and against a strong tradition of sex segregation originating from the Ottoman times (Acar 1998). Since the early years of the Turkish Republic voluntary institutional initiatives, which were strongly supported by state ideology and deliberate government policy, were used as major mechanisms of change toward sex equality in the country. Whilst there is no legislation in the field of sex equality in Turkey, in its absence, sex equality in employment was nevertheless sought through government policies which bureaucratically eliminated overtly discriminatory policies and practices from the formal processes of public employment. Second, Kandiyoti (1997) noted that academic careers were socially constructed and sex-typed as 'safe' and 'proper' choices for graduate women in Turkey. Turkish women were socially encouraged to take up professional employment, as opposed to other entrepreneurial or commercial careers. Professional careers were viewed to be harmonious with the potent image of 'a respectful Turkish woman' which was effectively used to demarcate women's careers in 'safe', 'secure' and 'esteemed' forms of professional employment, discouraging them to take up employment in semi-skilled or unskilled sectors of employment. Third, Özgüç (1998) suggested that traditionally male academics pursued career opportunities which offered them better financial prospects outside the university sector and that male graduates displayed growing disinterest in taking up academic careers due to their lower financial benefits.

Sex segregation may change over time; the expectation and some evidence suggests that it will become less in the UK (Walby 1997). In Turkish academy, the Western European pattern of horizontal sex segregation became more prevalent in the last decade (Acar 1996). There are two underlying reasons of this reversal. First, since the 1980s, Turkey has been following a neo-liberal economic system, which has reversed government policy on labour market regulation. This has diluted the sex equality ideology pursued by the state as part of a

set of gradually disintegrating and polarising republican principles. Second, there was an emergence of political parties and economic institutions that advocated sex segregation in clear opposition to the principles of secularism. These two changes led a shift in social attitudes, which emulated the relaxation of the previous government's ideology and policy of combating sex-typing and discrimination. Thus, the image of republican Turkish women who were expected, with a strong nationalist sentiment, to 'self-sacrifice' and 'pioneer' in advancement of the Turkish nation in every branch of civilisation has lost its influence between a generation of young women graduates and their families (Özbilgin 1998). It could be argued that similar to their counterparts in other European countries, many women in modern Turkey perceive their careers with more individualised aspirations than with a collectivist sense of fulfilling a nation duty. Thus, as the nationalistic and republican significance of women's employment in non-traditional disciplines is declining in Turkey, traditional methods of eliminating sex-typing and segregation of academic careers are following suit in the higher education sector.

While several researchers called for increased attention to the issues of sex equality in academic employment in Turkey, the Bett Report (1999) highlighted a need for improved fairness in pay and conditions for women in the higher education sector in Britain. Similarly, in the international arena, the late 1980s and the 1990s witnessed a growing body of literature which explored the careers of academic women and the issue of sex equality in academic employment world-wide, highlighting the persistent and pervasive nature of gendered disadvantage. Following this tradition, this paper draws on and aims to contribute to the literature on sex equality in academic employment. In particular it aims to provide insights to the persistent problem of sex discrimination in senior academic employment in Turkey and the resultant policy implications.

2 Transformation of the Higher Education System in Turkey

Turkey has a tradition of higher education that dates back to the early 11th century. *Nizamiye Medrese*, which was a Turkish-Islamic education institution, founded by the Seljuk Turks is often considered the first higher education establishment of the Turks (Güvenç 1997). *Medreses* offered courses in religion, Islamic law, philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and medicine to a group of bright male students who were educated to join the Ottoman clergy. *Medrese* tradition, which provided relatively good standards of higher education to a privileged minority of male students during the growth years of the Ottoman Empire, failed to sustain this effort during the declining years of the Empire. The *humayuns* (higher education colleges) replaced the *medreses* starting from the late 18th century. Later in the 19th

and the early 20th centuries French and Western European influences were strongly felt in the higher education sector. Several higher education institutions similar to the *grandes ecoles* and Anglo-American style colleges were established in Istanbul. Following the foundation of the new Turkish Republic in the early 1920s, a series of higher education reforms were introduced both to nationalise the higher education sector and to improve its quality and breadth of service. As part of these reforms the Ottoman system of higher education was abolished and a westernised university system was introduced. These historical changes in the higher education system followed a revolutionary, rather than an evolutionary path as the *medrese*, *humayun* and the university systems embodied markedly different political stances ranging from Turkish-Islamic to westernised and from nationalist to internationalist, respectively.

Women's employment in the sector has also undergone a series of radical changes, which were in parallel with the structural and scholarly transformations of the sector. Three phases of transformation could be identified in the history of women's employment in the higher education sector. The first phase involved penetration of women in academic employment through a set of principles introduced by Mustafa Kemal¹. These principles were consolidated in the second phase of transformation. Relatively stable growth rate of the university sector is replaced by a rapid expansion of the university sector in the third phase, with the emergence and proliferation of privately owned universities in Turkey in the 1990s.

2.1 Phase One: Atatürk's initiatives

Second half of the 19th century witnessed social movements which emerged in opposition to totalitarian and theocratic regime of the Ottoman Empire. The roots of the modern feminist movement in Turkey can be traced back to this period, and into the Second Constitutional Monarchy period in the early years of the 20th century. However, the relaxation of the religious controls over Muslim women's employment in the Empire happened much later, following the social dislocation during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and later during the First World War (Özbilgin 1998). One example of disintegration of sex segregation in public and private spaces was the Ottoman Women's Nursing Organisation, which was founded in 1876 in order to provide nursing services to the survivors of the Crimean War in 1877 (Güzel 1980). Later in the 1920s, supported by a growing number of liberated women, the teachings and speeches of Atatürk had a far-reaching impact on women's employment in Turkey. Speaking in support of lifting restrictions imposed on women's employment in both political

¹ Mustafa Kemal was later named as Atatürk, the ancestor or father of Turks, by the Turkish Grand National Assembly because of his spectacular military and civil achievements in modernising Turkey.

and public platforms, Atatürk's vision was to encourage Turkish women into all sectors of employment by removing the barriers in their way. He pursued this vision by lifting occupational bars placed on women's employment and supporting the first wave of women professionals, such as doctors, pilots and educators in their careers and promoting their visibility as role models in the Turkish media (Tekeli 1982; Arat 1994). Reflecting these efforts in his personal life, he encouraged his adopted daughter to become the first female pilot in Turkey. Turkish women's inclusion in the education sector as educators corresponds and owes much to these early years of the new Turkish republic². One of the major changes in the university sector in the 1930s was the penetration of Turkish women into the ranks of academic employment with the establishment of two national universities in Istanbul and one in Ankara.

² Atatürk's programme of civil reform was embodied in the Republican People's Party's 'Six Arrows': republicanism, nationalism, populism, statism, secularism and revolution. Laws relating to the emancipation of women were introduced in 1934, giving women the the right to vote and to hold parliamentary seats. Emancipation was strengthened by the abolition of polygamy, marriage was recognised as a civil contract and divorce was recognised as a civil action.

2.2 Phase Two: Consolidation of Atatürk's principles

Approaching the end of the 20th century, many professions such as medicine, engineering as well as the academic profession, which were traditionally considered as male preserves, were penetrated by increasing numbers of women in Turkey (Acar 1998; Şenel 1981). These changes did not happen overnight and they placed high social and work demands on women professionals, as the male dominated social norms and workplace cultures continued to disadvantage women. The social norms on women's domestic labour, for example, have failed to adapt to the changing role of women in paid employment. Women were persistently expected to manage most of the domestic work, although many of them have taken up paid employment outside home. Nevertheless, this increase in numbers of women in employment enabled increasing number of women to aspire for and achieve better career prospects in academic positions than achieved by earlier generations. The second phase of women's employment in higher education could be identified with the pursuit of deliberate government policies, which sought inclusion of women in the sector. However, the transformation of social norms on the role of women and men at work and sharing and management of domestic work was slower than the rate of increase in women's economic participation. Nevertheless, the three socio-economic factors, which encouraged women into the higher education sector, were strongly felt until the introduction of neo-liberal economic system and its underpinning social values, which triggered yet another transformation in the higher education sector.

2.3 Phase Three: Expansion of the higher education sector

One of the contemporary forms of transformation that the Turkish higher education system has been experiencing is the rapid expansion of the number of institutions in the sector since the early years of the 1990s. There are currently 72 universities in Turkey in 2000; 43 of these were established in the 1990s, engendering an expansion in the number of academic staff from 28,114 in 1989 to 60,129 in 1999 and professorial posts from 2,772 to 7,832 in the same period (YÖK 1999). This expansion was largely responsible for mobilising the upward progression of otherwise relatively stable careers of many academic staff in this sector.

In order to manage this transformation, YÖK, the governing body of the Turkish higher education sector, has been renovating its management and performance appraisal systems. YÖK has introduced a centralised management system, which aimed to control and regulate academic employment processes with the intention of making them more efficient. In pursuit of this rather ambitious aim, YÖK established a set of targets and standards concerning

academic performance, aiming to improve and sustain the academic performance of the 'new' and 'old' higher education institutions (YÖK 1999). As the imposition of both the new management systems and performance standards has caused discontent and disquiet at the trade union level (Önder 1999), expansion of the university sector had a manifold impact on academic careers in the higher education sector. Emergence and rapid growth of the 'new' university sector, which has an increasing demand for competent lecturing, research, and administrative staff, has inevitably accelerated the career mobility of staff in the 'old' university sector, offering them attractive career progression opportunities in some of the relatively better resourced 'new' universities. These changes had a significant impact on the gendered dynamics of career mobility and development of female and male academics, who were aspiring for higher positions of power and authority in the 'old' university sector, to realise their career plans in the 'new' university sector.

The process of academic progression from associate professorship grade to a professorship is centrally regulated and standardised across the university sector in Turkey. YÖK's regulations suggest that when a professorial post becomes vacant or available at a university, the director of the institution needs to advertise this in one of the five most popular daily newspapers in Turkey. This advertisement needs to allow a 15-day application period. The vacancy is also communicated to other universities and technical colleges. Candidates are asked to provide a portfolio including their resumes, details of their scientific publications, and unpublished conference and congress papers, references made to these publications in other works, their educational and training activities, continuing and completed supervision of research degrees and their overall contribution to their current institution with a cover letter (1991 amendment to YÖK regulations). Upon the receipt of portfolios from professorial candidates, three conditions are sought for a successful promotion to professorship (1986 amendment). First, the applicant should have five years or longer service at the associate professor grade in a discipline closely associated with the professorial programme for which he or she is applying. Second, the applicant should have a portfolio of original research publications produced at an international level, and third, the applicant should be selected for a professorial post (YÖK 1998). These regulations do not make any implicit or explicit references to sex equality issues such as direct or indirect discrimination in promotion and selection. Although having a standardised procedure for promotion to professorship serves to eliminate some bias from these decisions, sex discrimination is not specifically and explicitly ruled out from this process. As Cockburn (1989) argued, this kind of over-reliance on standardised employment systems as a means to safeguard and provide equality could be identified as the liberal approach to equal opportunities. She explained that although the liberal ideology was useful in stamping out explicitly discriminatory practices and

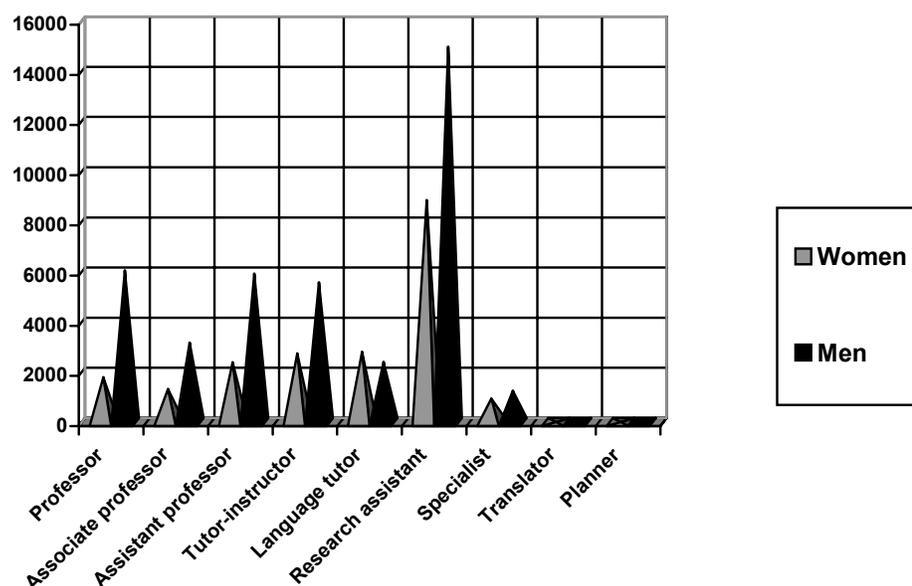
policies in the Western countries, it was unable to tackle more subtle and indirect forms of gendered disadvantage, due to the very nature of the work and employment systems and structures. She argued that the employment systems were originally set up to suit the lifestyles of men. Therefore, standardisation of employment processes does not readily result in sex equality, without a radical and transformational change in the work structures and cultures which make them more accommodating for women, as they have been for men.

Based on Cockburn's (1989) framework of liberal, radical and transformational ideologies of equal opportunities, the ideology that dominates the sectors of employment in Turkey could be described as an advanced form of liberal ideology (Woodward and Özbilgin 1999; Özbilgin 2000). The regulations on employment in the sector do not make any direct reference to women and men at work. While direct and overt forms of sex discrimination were not ruled out with explicit legislation and policy in the higher education sector in Turkey, lack of any references to women's employment in the sector is considered an indicator of anti-discriminatory policy making. However, despite standardisation of employment procedures and policies for both sexes, it is important to note that indirect and covert forms of sex discrimination prevailed in working conditions and career opportunities in the sector. Thus, it was argued that although an increasing number of women pursued professional careers in Turkey since the early 1920s, this did not alter the patriarchal relationships which persistently assigned domestic duties to Turkish women, despite their increased role in paid employment and professional careers (Koray 1993). Aytaç (1997) also pointed out that the Turkish women's maternity-leaves, domestic responsibilities and child-care roles still constitute barriers to their career development in Turkey. Similarly, based on research conducted in the UK, Healy (1999) and Ledwith and Manfredi (1999) argued that improvements in the numerical representation of women in education is not a reliable indicator of equality of opportunities in this sector. If these changes are not accompanied by a transformation of organisational cultures and structures which are more accommodating for women, they merely serve to create a subset of female academics who are disadvantaged by the structures that men have historically built to suit their personal lives.

Therefore, despite the social, political and financial factors encouraging women's increased participation in the academic labour market, improvement in the numerical representation of women in academic employment has not yet reached a level which may warrant complacency. Field research in the late 1980s (Acar 1983) and the 1990s (Acar 1998) identified that vertical and horizontal sex segregation was still prevalent in the sector. Figure One and Table One demonstrate the prevalence of both vertical and horizontal sex segregation in the sector. While women constituted 34.6 per cent of the academic staff in

Turkey, they were underrepresented in hierarchical positions and disproportionately represented in specialist roles, such as language tutors, specialists and translators. Of relevance to this paper, women were underrepresented at each higher grades of the academic hierarchy, making 28.7 per cent of assistant professors, 29.4 per cent of associate professors and only 22.9 per cent of the full professors in 1999. It is important to highlight that the most common points of entry to the academic profession are research assistant and the tutor/instructor grades, where men and women were more proportionately represented.

Figure One: Academic employment by grade and sex in Turkey in 1999



Source: ÖSYM 1998-1999 Academic Year Higher Education Statistics, ÖSYM, Ankara, 1999.

It was argued here that women’s participation in academic employment has been consistently increasing due to deliberate national policies, social sex-typing of academic jobs as ‘fit’ for women, and the transformation of employment practices and pay systems which deem employment in the higher education sector less attractive for male graduates. Despite these factors of encouragement, and comparatively favourable numerical representation of women in the sector, the resilience of horizontal and vertical segregation suggests that the quality of women’s employment in the sector has not radically improved. This paper aims to consider the reasons for this.

Table One: Academic employees in the higher education sector in Turkey by grade and sex

ACADEMIC GRADE	SEX	NUMBERS	PERCENTAGES
PROFESSOR	Total	7832	13.0 in Total
	Women	1790	22.9
	Men	6042	77.1
	Total	4487	07.5 in Total

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR	Women Men	1321 3166	29.4 70.6
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR	Total Women Men	8289 2380 5909	13.8 in Total 28.7 71.3
TUTOR-INSTRUCTOR	Total Women Men	8299 2738 5561	13.8 in Total 33.0 67.0
LANGUAGE TUTOR	Total Women Men	5193 2796 2397	09.0 in Total 53.8 46.2
RESEARCH ASSISTANT	Total Women Men	23805 8853 14952	39.6 in Total 37.2 62.8
SPECIALIST	Total Women Men	2177 932 1245	04.0 in Total 42.8 57.2
TRANSLATOR	Total Women Men	19 9 10	- in Total 47.4 52.6
EDUCATION AND TRAINING PLANNER	Total Women Men	28 7 21	- in Total 25 75
TOTAL	Total Women Men	60129 20826 39303	100 in Total 34.6 65.4

Source: ÖSYM 1998-1999 Academic Year Higher Education Statistics, ÖSYM, Ankara, 1999.

3 Research Method

The focal population of this project, professors in the higher education sector in Turkey, constitutes an elite and marginal group with distinctive attributes in comparison to the national labour force in Turkey. To understand the underlying reality of this group's employment experience, a qualitative research approach using in-depth interviews was used. 38 semi-structured interviews³ were carried out with Turkish professors. The professors were drawn from six different universities in Istanbul, representing a wide range of institutional affiliations (Table Two), as well as different age groups (Table Three). Two of the male and four of the female professors were employed part-time. One male and one female participants were retired. Others were holding full-time posts in their institutions. Average age of starting paid employment between the participants of both sexes was 23, although women participants started marginally later. All the participants were drawn from universities in Istanbul. However, this is justified as Istanbul is the main University-City in Turkey, which boasts a higher number of universities than any other city in the country: 21 of the 72 universities in Turkey are based in Istanbul (YÖK 1999). University sector in Istanbul offers diverse opportunities of career and employment mobility and advancement without having to uproot domestic lives, which the academic workers in eastern parts of Turkey may not fully enjoy. Thus by situating the study in Istanbul, insight was gained into a group of women who, theoretically, will face fewer structural constraints associated with location on their careers and mobility. It is also important to note that all of the participants of this project are drawn from the 'old' university sector in Turkey.⁴

Table Two: Academic disciplines of participating professors by sex

Academic discipline	Men	Women
Business and management	3	5
Social sciences	0	4
Health science and medicine	7	11
Economics	5	3
Total	15	23

³ The interviews were conducted in Turkish and subsequently translated into English. Initially, 48 professors in Turkish universities were invited to participate in this study. While 38 successful interviews were conducted and transcribed, ten interviews were not completed. Two professors, who were invited to participate, declined the invitation, sending their apologies that are largely linked to workload related pressures on their time. Although, others have also declared their intention to participate, due to several extenuating circumstances these interviews did not materialise. The overall level of participation was satisfactory considering that the population in question was not greater than 8000 individuals and that the number of participants compared positively with similar qualitative studies in the field (Acar 1993).

Table Three: Age distribution of participants by sex

Age	Men	Women	Total
35-40	0	1	1
41-45	1	4	5
46-50	6	8	14
51-55	5	7	12
56-over	3	3	6
Total	15	23	38

While all the male participants were married, 17 of the female participants were married, four were single and two were divorced. National statistics in the sector indicate a similar trend that 62 per cent of the male academics, 51 per cent of female academics in Turkey were married (Acar 1996). The relevance of marriage and family formation in career developments of women and men in the higher education sector is highlighted at the discussion section of this paper. It is also important to note here that women are traditionally expected to marry upward in the socio-economic ladder of hierarchy. This socio-cultural expectation deems upward marriage a difficult choice for women who achieve career success when they were single (Table Four).

Table Four: Major changes in participants' domestic lives since they started academic careers

Changes in domestic lives	Men	Women	Total Numbers
Marriage and child birth	8	10	18
Marriage	3	2	5
Child birth	-	2	2
Marriage, child and divorce	-	2	2
Marriage and divorce	1	-	1
No change	2	6	8
No response	1	1	2
Total	15	23	38

This paper draws on a symbolic interactionist methodology, which seeks to report and evaluate the individual accounts of study participants (Fielding 1993). While the findings of this study are indicative of practices and policies of sex equality in the sector and give voice to the experiences of individual participants, they neither propose overarching generalisations nor represent the experiences of non-participating professors in Turkey.

⁴ The research team is planning to conduct a comparable study in the 'new' university sector, in order to examine the possible gendered impacts of the growth of the university sector, as well as the emergence of the privately owned universities, on the career development experiences of professors in Turkey.

The interview schedule of this study consisted of thirty-two open-ended questions, which allowed the participants a degree of freedom to determine the issues they would like to discuss within a broad framework of sex equality, career development and higher education in Turkey. The interview schedule contained two main parts. First part provided 12 in-depth interview questions which address the two main objectives of this study: first, exploring issues of sex equality in career development in the higher education sector as viewed by the participants. Secondly, an examination of their personal experiences of sex equality and discrimination in the sector. The second part of the schedule contained 20 questions, which aimed to understand the socio-economic and institutional profiles of the survey participants.

4 Discussion

Turkey now boasts the highest proportion of female university professors in wider Europe. It was noted that the recent surveys anticipated a further increase in the number of female professors in Turkey. The literature review section of this paper evaluated the three main arguments offered in the literature for women's relatively favourable representation in the Turkish higher education sector. It could be argued that they pose theoretical and practical flaws on three accounts. First, claiming that the deliberate state policies were responsible for increasing participation of women in academic employment undermines the collective and individual efforts of women academics who sought inclusion in those positions which were traditionally held by men who often excluded them or demarcated their accession in a sector where there is little awareness of sex equality issues. Secondly, their conceptualisations fail to acknowledge that only a proportion of privileged Turkish women, most of whom were educated in the urban centres of Turkey, were socially encouraged to take up academic careers. The social encouragement they received could be overstated if it is assumed that many Turkish women enjoyed this level of support for their education and careers. Turkish women's unfavourable level of representation in other sectors and in overall economic activity, in comparison to their European counterparts, also confirms the relatively elite and privileged status of academic women in Turkey. Lastly, the argument that women enjoyed better career prospects in the sector as men did not want to enter these underpaid jobs cannot fully account for the domination of men in professorial posts in disciplines such as geography (Özgüç 1998), which did not offer financially promising career alternatives neither in nor outside the higher education sector in Turkey. Building on these theoretical assertions, the paper now turns to the career experiences of Turkish professors. In particular, it explores social norms, transformation of the higher education sector (practices, policies, governance and ideology), and the transformation of academic roles in the sector, thus moving from broader social issues to the career experiences of individual participants.

4.1 Dominant Social Values and Domestic Roles

Inclusion of women in professional employment has a history of over 75 years in Turkey. However, the social norms which barred and demarcated women's inclusion to economic activity, particularly in non-agricultural sectors, dates back to centuries of Ottoman Imperial rule in the country. Therefore the contradictions and transformation of these two forces of pull and push offer a better understanding of women and men's relative status in the sector.

Functionalist family ideology, which traditionally assigned carer and domestic roles to women and breadwinner roles to men, continues to be the main social frame of reference in Turkey. One female professor explained how the functionalist family ideology was experienced in the higher education sector and how it created structural constraints for both men and women.

I believe that there is equality between sexes. However, once you enter the academic profession, the difficulties they face are different. However much that men help, the details of activities such as responsibility of caring for the family and children are women's responsibilities. Maybe, it is easier to cope with these in an academic career, because of flexibility of time commitments. One barrier for men is the low wages. Men, who cannot earn enough, are perceived as less respected both from women and men's perspective. I believe that this is not fair. It is very positive for a woman to have an academic career. It has high social status. It is not important if she earns less. However, if men earn less, they are victimised. If they cannot sustain a family wage, they are made to feel guilty (female professor).

Despite increased economic participation rates of women and changes in women and men's relative contribution to the family formation and economy, the social ideology of family fails to keep pace with the changes in the employment sector, where the myth of male breadwinner has long been challenged by dual career couples, single income earners and other alternative family formations in the country. Despite an apparent increase in women in academic employment, social norms were slow to adapt to this change in men and women's roles in the domestic and work domains.

There are no barriers on men's way in terms of career progression. However, we find it increasingly difficult to attract male research assistants, because of lower wages. Most applicants are women (male professor).

The comment potentially contradicts the national data which show that 63 per cent of research assistants are male (Table One). The data do not show the proportion of applicants to actual assistants; it is possible to speculate that women outnumber men in their

applications and that discrimination is rife at the appointment stage, or even that this professor perceived even a proportionate number of women as too many.

In the field study, one male professor stated that barriers to career development exists only for men, while other male participants argued that marriage and child care constituted two important barriers to women's career development. Evidencing the existence of a functionalist ideology, female participants suggested that the 'financial responsibilities of being a man' and 'compulsory military service' are the main hindrances for men's career advancement in the sector.

Men are supposed to take care of the family and earn enough money in order to accomplish this (female professor)

Families, which are often considered as the pillars of the Turkish social cohesion, appear to be common sources of influence in career choices of academic workers. The parental family as well as the partners play a significant role in supporting or obstructing the career choices of academics.

My mother and father supported me both in material and spiritual ways until I lost them. Since I got married, my husband has been supporting me by being understanding about my work and exchanging ideas with me (female professor).

While only five male professors acknowledged the support of their immediate families, five of them cited the support they received from their colleagues. Female professors were more rigorous in acknowledging the support of their immediate families, friends and their colleagues. Majority of them (19 female professors) identified the support of their families and friends as important sources of encouragement during their careers and 11 female professors also identified the support of their colleagues as relevant. The role of significant others, particularly partners, is a recurring theme in the literature on women's achievement (see for example Ledwith, Colgan et al. 1990; Healy and Kraithman 1996).

I was supported by my family as they made life easier for me at home and by my colleagues as they decreased my lecture hours to help me (female professor).

My family and the faculty members supported and encouraged me by acknowledging and praising my career success (male professor).

Whilst interviewees acknowledged the importance of family, this is in the Turkish context where the social institution of marriage is structured to suit men's working lives, promoting the uneven share of life roles for married couples. Therefore career success for academic

workers was often associated with the support they received from their families, in overcoming both the unfavourable social expectations of married life and the difficulties posed by these expectations in their work roles. A female professor explained how the support of her family and her colleagues worked:

My colleagues and the head of subject group helped me in rectifying my relative lack of experience and knowledge, and in finding me a professorial position, while the members of my family helped me by taking on much of my domestic responsibilities. For example, I was able to work at the faculty for Saturdays and Sundays, and they would do my share of work at home (female professor).

The social and domestic expectations sometimes meant that the female participants experienced difficulties and developed individual coping strategies.

I solved majority of the economic problems with the help of my family. There are also difficulties of being a woman. For example, I had to leave my job during my maternity leave. So I put my private life at the bottom of my priority list and tried to run my family life in parallel with my career (female participant).

Although the partners and families were reported to have a significant role in career development of academics in Turkey, nine of the participants also cited the influence of teachers, academic supervisors, acquaintances and friends in their career choices. Informed personal decision making for career development was offered as a secondary source of influence on career choices and moves of the majority of the participants, while the social influences were considered of further significance. Although this suggests that the close knit fabric of Turkish social and family life had an undeniable impact on academic workers' career choices, the next section of this paper clearly identifies how the changes in the employment systems failed to promote policies and practices which acknowledged and addressed this influence.

4.2 Transformation of the University Sector: governance, ideology, policies and practices

It was argued that the structural and ideological changes that have taken place in the higher education sector in Turkey since the 11th century was of revolutionary nature, with little scope for evolutionary or gradual transformations. There were significant changes in the Turkish university sector in the last two decades, which replicated this trend. University senates lost their autonomy from government controls and police surveillance in the 1980s, when a regulatory and centralised framework of higher educational governance system was introduced. The sector also witnessed tightening of managerial controls over academic

employment in the 1980s. Following the establishment of YÖK in the 1980s, there was a huge expansion in the number of new privately owned universities in Turkey. Establishment of a large number of 'new' universities has created a new dichotomy between the 'new' and the 'old' universities. Dimensions of this dichotomy were visible in the funding, career mobility and prestige associated with these universities. While some the 'new' universities were well-funded by large conglomerates and high student fees, the 'old' universities continued to depend on government subsidy and lower student fees. The new university sector offered better financial prospects to their employees in comparison to the old university sector. However, some of the old universities which were recognised and respected as competitive and prestigious institutes of higher education continued to sustain their reputation for employing a select group of academic workers to 2000, offering their academic employees a high status recognition in Turkey.

4.2.1 Mobility

These changes in the sector encouraged various forms of mobility in the relatively stable careers of academic workers. Academics were able to seek employment or career progression in the ranks of this rapidly growing higher education sector. As the current legislation allowed, academic workers were able to hold jobs in two or more universities in the sector and engage in commercial activities as consultants. Interviewees give some support to the argument that low pay is one of the reasons why the proportion of women academics is increasing in Turkey (Ergüder, 1998).

Having to work outside the sector in order to earn a living wage is a barrier to men's inclusion in the sector (male professor).

Despite men's interest and their abilities, worries over family income, socio-economic status associated with low academic wages and the relative importance of money for men discourages their entry into this profession (female professor).

Women academics, who were experiencing backlogs in their career advancement in the old university sector, were beneficiaries of the expansion of the university sector, as they were able to seek career advancement opportunities in the new university sector. Although the participants identified that the new university sector has enhanced their chances of having upwardly mobile career patterns, or has offered them part-time employment opportunities. Another important difference, which the participants highlighted, was the gendered difference between the employment practices of universities in the east and the west of Turkey.

I haven't had any barriers during my career progression. I also know that women's careers are not demarcated or controlled in our department. However, considering that men dominate the academic ranks in the Anatolian⁵ universities, it would not be very easy to say there aren't any barriers there (female professor).

Despite this growth of employment opportunities in the new university sector, majority of participants in this study have not changed their workplaces during their careers. While nine male and 14 female participants have not changed workplaces, six male and nine female participants have worked in up to three different universities during their careers. Explaining their reasons for career mobility, participants cited lack of career prospects, marriage and domestic reasons, such as education of children, and caring for the elderly, as of primary importance in their choices. Following the discussion on social norms in Turkey (and from our understanding of the nature of women's employment in Western Europe), it is not surprising that there is a gendered aspect to career mobility as women are expected to show more care and concern for their families, children and elderly than their male counterparts in mobility decisions (as well as generally).

4.2.2 Sex Segregation

The paper has outlined the nature of horizontal and vertical segregation in Turkey. However, the sources of sex segregation are multi-faceted as academic work involves a complex set of stakeholders, ranging from students, academics, academic managers, members of the university senates, and other legal and social groups.

I think sex segregation is partially prevalent. However, it is not so disturbing in this institution. Male colleagues bare this attitude of 'I know better' more obviously than female colleagues do. They elected a female head of department in our school recently. I am one of the first two female marketing professors in Turkey. Sex segregation sometimes exists in student attitudes, as they consider male lecturers as more of an authority and more knowledgeable in their subjects. Otherwise, the majority of the management committee members are women. Male members are acting very politely because of this (female professor).

One male professor explained how horizontal sex segregation was reinforced in medical education in his institution.

There is not an overt form of discrimination. However, beyond closed doors, there can be discriminatory practices in the field of 'surgery'. If you graduated in medicine at the age of 22 and qualified as a surgeon through the TUS exam, when I saw you I would say 'It is a pity you are a girl!'. Surgery is a discipline where you need physical strength and stamina and where you would need to tackle big drunken patients. There are very few

⁵ Those in Eastern Turkey

female surgeons and its reasons are obvious. But go to general surgery, public health departments nearly all the doctors are female. Similarly, in primary sciences you would find many female professors and very few male ones. There is not an overt discrimination here. But women don't want it anyway. However, our female colleagues who have the physical and mental conditions suitable for this job are conducting their professions to its best. So there is no gendered form of inequality, as long as one's qualities are fit for his or her discipline (male professor).

It was suggested that the persistence of vertical sex segregation in the sector could be partially explained by male academics' reluctance to share with their female peers the financial rewards associated with these higher grades.

Men are able to overcome financial difficulties at higher positions of decision making at the university. This is one of the reasons why women are excluded from these grades. Although the proportion of women academics is high in each branch of science in Turkish universities, this proportion was not sustained in higher grades of management, at directors' level and the senate of the university (female professor).

Although it may appear paradoxical with the above statement, there were considerable improvements in women's representation in the ranks of academic management over the last two decades. The nature of this improvement however deserves further attention, as it will be explained in the subsequent section.

The governance of the university sector has also been transformed from a decentralised system in 1970s to a centralised governance system, embodied by YÖK, in the 1980s and the 1990s. YÖK and its various policies, which were often considered gender neutral, had a different, yet significant gendered impact on female professors' careers in Turkey. One female and two male participants, who were in higher levels of academic hierarchy during the 1980s, argued that YÖK was a source of hindrance in their career development. They were mostly concerned with the bureaucracy involved in career management processes at the YÖK level.

YÖK's bureaucracy has hindered my career progression from assistant professorship to the professorship (male professor).

I experienced severe problems during my career progression. For example, with a Senate decision in 25 November 1982 I was promoted to professorship, However, I wasn't able to use this title for six years, based on the article 2547. Benefiting from the article 3455, which was enacted in 7 November 1992, I started using my title. I was paid assistant professor's wages even then. They drew a professorial contract for me after 1988. I also experienced similar problems during my progression from associate to the assistant professorship grade (female professor).

One participant explained that increased bureaucracy and administrative roles in the higher education sector also hindered creative and innovative approaches to research and education.

Because I was very hard working and productive, I did not face any serious barriers to my career development. However many of the innovative projects of teaching and research were shelved because I was not holding an administrative position, which controlled such initiatives (female professor).

Although given the different experiences of many of the men, it may be more accurate to suggest that it was lack of access to material resources and positional power that are concealed in this statement.

The manifestation of positional power is evident in a number of ways. Working time is always a critical issue in women's employment (Rubery and Horrell 1992; Healy 1999). In this study, it was suggested that the working time demanded by various academic duties may compromise successful accommodation of domestic and work lives for individual academics. The following example is particularly interesting:

Some male professors do not want to come to work in the early hours of the morning. Because of this, women professors are forced to do the morning lectures. Although it is their job also in the morning to feed the children, get them ready for school, women can cope with this system. Some male professors say that they cannot wake up early. Even when men become administrators or managers, they cannot make it to work early in the morning. Some of them are saying that they are using the flexibility of being a manager, and some others are not happy with this so they are not applying for administrative jobs (female professor).

The YÖK policies, which aimed to promote fairness and employment mobility in the higher education sector in the 1980s, had a considerably negative impact on women academics' careers, as they failed to recognise different social and domestic expectations placed on women and men's career mobility in Turkey.

YÖK had hindered my career considerably. The assistant professors have been banned from becoming professors in their own universities between the years of 1981 and 1988. My professorship has been delayed for five years, since I couldn't leave my family and go to a university in another city (female professor).

This gendered impact could be partially explained with reference to gendered 'choices' of career mobility and social expectations, which continue to allow Turkish men greater freedom of movement and mobility in pursuit of career opportunities, while constraining women's career 'choices' with a different set of social expectations.

4.2.3 Perceptions of Discrimination

Eight male and 11 female participants stated that there is not a gendered form of disadvantage for men in the sector. Similarly, 10 male and 12 female participants argued that women do not face gendered disadvantage in academic employment. Considering gendered differences in female and male academics careers, it is hard to account for these statements. However, it could be argued that as 16 of the female participants and six of the male participants hold managerial and administrative positions, their experiences are considerably privileged, therefore relatively free from gender bias. One participant offered an explanation for why very few participants might feel that there is not a gendered form of disadvantage in the sector:

If you compare higher education with other occupational groups, there are only a very few barriers. However, there are some barriers common to both sexes such as the financial and resource limitations, and the difficulty of coping with academic and administrative burdens (female professor).

However, when asked about barriers that the participants faced as academic workers, their responses showed a gendered variation. While 12 male academics stated that they have not faced any disadvantages or barriers to their career development, three of them offered reasons related to the management processes involved in these decisions. While 13 female professors argued that they have not experienced personal barriers to their career development, 10 participants offered reasons, such as lack of support from family and friends, undergoing a divorce, having a child with disability, and administrative blunders, which constituted barriers to their career advancement. It was clear again that the family roles and social expectations had gendered influences on career development of individual academics.

It is also important to emphasise that there are no explicitly or overtly discriminatory policy statements in the sector. However, some forms of employment disadvantage which are due to social norms is considered 'normal', as the social norms were not viewed as part of an equality ideology in the sector which propagated an anti-discriminatory liberal ideology since the early days of its establishment. In a way, lack of radical or transformational perspectives which are critical of the uneven gendered impact of social norms discouraged the development of an equal opportunities consciousness in the sector which could aim to eradicate work cultures that continue to disadvantage women. A participant argued that:

Female professors, especially if they are holding an administrative position, do not perceive the invisible barriers as barriers. Because they are women who have already overcome those barriers in order to reach those positions. Therefore one should also study the experiences of associate and assistant professors, who are experiencing

gendered hindrances at work. Because, once qualified as a professor these problems are forgotten and the professors may develop different perspectives (female professor).

4.2.4 Career Aspirations

There were changes in political ideology from a first generation of women advancing the cause of republicanism to the second and third generations motivated by the individualised career aspirations grounded in an ideology of neo-liberalism. Strongly linked with changes in political economic system, the state ideology of anti-discriminatory policy making has been diluted and fragmented in the last two decades. One female professor explained her aspirations to become a professor, making explicit the ideological role of self-sacrifice and sense of duty, which were potent characteristics of a republican ideology in the country. However, the professors in Turkey represent a group of academics that hold a different set of personal values, than the new generation of academics that are entering the profession as research assistants and associate professors.

The primary factor for career development in this profession is the very identity and personality of the individual. He or she should not be deterred by problems. He or she should like to work and should not enjoy gossiping. The time for such activities like gossiping should be invested in preparing projects. Environment is also important. It is important to create an environment of research, without hiding behind excuses such as 'I ordered a book and it arrived in three years'. He or she should be in contact with colleagues in other countries, should be productive in reading, writing and open to new ideas. One should be self-sacrificial. For example, I use colour transparencies when I am doing presentations. I am sacrificing from other expenditures when thinking about this spending. I do not buy smart suits. I can wear the same thing to work. You need to love what you are doing (female professor).

The professor is presenting her perception of academic work, which demands total dedication and commitment, even down to personal spending on colour photocopying. Her image is determined by her work, not appearances nor political networking. This also suggests that she may be intolerant of academics who do not adopt this form of occupational 'commitment'.

Despite a prevalent level of complacency for sex equality and an overall improvement in the representation of women in professorial posts, investigation of the accounts of the participants suggested that the quality of women professors' employment experience differed markedly from that of their male colleagues. The accommodation of domestic and work lives, sharing of administrative and managerial roles, involvement in commercial activities and the nature of support the participants received from their colleagues and families continued to have profound gendered impacts on the career development experiences of Turkish professors.

4.3 Transformation of Academic Roles

Academic work involves a complex set of processes and activities. Similar to their other European counterparts Turkish academics undertake teaching, research, administrative and supervision roles with varying degrees, largely depending on their individual aspirations and competencies. This section evaluates the gendered forms of transformation in these academic roles for the participants. The participants identified that main area of gendered transformation took place in administrative work.

4.3.1 Changes in the Career Progression to Professor

With the changes in career progression systems in the 1980s, teaching quality is no longer considered a relevant condition for promotions from assistant professorship to full professorship, while the quality of research output is viewed as the only condition for promotion to professorship.

It is now easier to become a professor. With the article 1750, the number and quality of scientific publications were important for promotion to professorships. However, personal attributes and human relations were also important then. However after the article 2547, you needed to move workplaces in order to seek promotion. You couldn't seek promotion in the same institution. However, this did not work. Later the attributes were taken out of the equation, and a system which 'manufactured' professorships was introduced. Without caring much whether a person reached maturity or not, when they finished their five year waiting period at the assistant professor grade, they were directly given the opportunity to apply for professorships. This is not a very positive development... What I meant by maturity was that they may have five or six publications. But they were not published in good quality journals. In the previous system, they would also review and appraise the teaching practice of a professorial candidate. Now they are only evaluating your publications and your science test. Pedagogic issues and developments in teaching quality are not important any more (female professor).

There were conflicting and contrasting views on the possible impacts of these changes on the quality of professorial promotions in Turkey.

Legal changes enabled individuals to qualify as professors in their own institutions. Academic publications also gained significance. Despite all that, due to financial reasons, nobody seems to be too keen on professorial positions (female professor).

Quality is prioritised in promotions to professorship. It approached international standards. The situation has improved with the establishment of privately funded universities in Turkey (female professor).

I believe that there were negative changes. There should be a certain criteria applied across the board for academic appointments, like you can see it in everything else in Turkey. However, they should not only look at the number of publications. The

performance of the academic worker should be balanced across a range of areas. If, for example, someone has published alone, without co-operating with colleagues, and failing to show concern for student welfare, then that person is not a member of the academy, but a researcher. Therefore, an academic worker should demonstrate competent performance across a range of activities such as publishing, administration, commercial, teaching, supervision and pastoral activities (male professor).

4.3.2 Research

As the academic progression policies produced by YÖK indicate, research output and publications in international journals are significant requirements for career progression in academic employment. This study identified that five male and 11 female professors ceased to produce academic publications after they were promoted to professorships. Several reasons were offered to explain this trend. The majority of these reasons highlight differences in course loads, supervision activities and early and late hours of working times of female and male professors.

The high amount of lecture requirements and the time lost during the bureaucratic affairs were the main hindrances for academic research and publishing. However, the positive and motivating atmosphere of the university is a supportive factor (female professor).

It was also indicated that beyond time commitments, the funding requirements of research projects often constituted barriers for female professors. Three female and one male participants argued that publishing through the university facilities was hard, due to lack of equipment and personnel. It also took such a long time that they believed they would not get back the invested effort.

4.3.3 Administration

Taking on an administrative role was reported to have a manifold impact on one's academic career. The administrative positions such as associate head or head of subject groups or departments were considered prestigious positions to hold in Turkish universities. While these roles were considered prestigious, they also offered their holders greater involvement in decision making and resource allocation within their institutions. However, accounts of several participants indicate that the role of administrative positions in academic employment is transforming, and that this transformation has an undeniable gendered dimension.

It was noted previously that male domination in administrative posts was prevalent in the sector. Participants noted this dominance was changing, as female participants reported an increase in their administrative roles and the male participants stated that their administrative responsibilities declined over the years and that this was a recognisable trend in the sector. In order to understand the true nature of this gendered transformation, we need to examine the transformation of the role and value of administrative work in academic employment. Reflecting on their administrative roles, respondents explained that disposing off administrative roles enabled them to take up commercial work or enjoy more leisure or social time. However, taking on administrative responsibilities posed further demands on academic workers' working times and workloads, whilst promising scant material rewards or opportunities of professional development, despite their increased contribution to work.

Changes in the participants' administrative roles indicate that male professors gradually abandoned their administrative roles to their female colleagues (see Tables Five and Six) and that being freed from administrative work, they were empowered to venture into professionally or financially promising areas of work. It was reported, for example, that many of the male professors pursued second careers as business consultants in their disciplines of specialisation in the commercial sector.

Table Five: Present and past administrative positions that participants held by gender

Do you currently hold an administrative position?	Men	Women
Yes, I do.	6	16
No, I don't.	9	7
Have you held an administrative position?	Men	Women
Yes, I do.	9	15
No, I don't.	6	8
Total	15	23

Table Six: Present administrative positions that participants held by gender

Title	Men	Women
Head of department	3	6
Associate head of department	-	2
Head of school	-	1
Head of institute	-	1
Assistant dean	-	2
Head of purchasing commission	-	1
Head of academic discipline	2	1
Head of surgery clinics	1	1
Manager of linguistic centre	-	1
Total	6 out of 15	16 out of 23

Despite this picture, respondents identified that the new generation of female academics followed the traditional male pattern of seeking professional and commercial success, as they were aspiring for managerial posts, and seeking commercially viable activities both within and outside the university sector. For example, young female academics were showing interest in employment in the 'new' private university sector and newly emerging business consultancies. However, a closer observation of career aspirations and achievements of academics of both sexes from different generations reveals that divergence of career patterns by sex emerged in later years of participants' academic employment and particularly after they established their first domestic partnerships. It is also important to note that emulating male academics' career patterns, female academics fail to challenge the work cultures, which disadvantage women who continue to assume more important roles in the domestic sphere. A further investigation of life cycle of discrimination in academic employment could uncover variations in the forms of sex discrimination by ages and academic positions of academic workers.

5 Conclusions

Turkey is an important country in which to study women's employment because the state ideology dominant in the three phases identified in the paper has promoted inclusion of women in professional life in Turkey and this has left an important legacy of greater representation of women at different levels in the labour market. This achievement should not be underestimated in the context of progress in other European countries. However, shifts in political and economic values are now putting this progress at risk.

This research has focused on the career developments of professors in the higher education sector in Turkey. It was identified that Turkish society has a high level of cohesiveness, based on a traditional functionalist family ideology. This pattern is even visible in the cities, where more individualised social norms might be expected.

Evaluation of participants' employment experiences in the higher education sector revealed that the employment systems were structured in a way which is based on separation of social and work life, so that social and domestic issues do not impinge on employees' academic performance. These provide gendered structural constraints limiting women's choices and requiring those who succeed to act as 'surrogate men' (Crompton and Le Feuvre 1996). It was with the support of significant others that the women in this study were able to overcome these barriers.

The findings suggest that even the most privileged of workers, women professors, do not work in structurally enabling environments, and this is reinforced by the dominant economic and gender order. The uneven effects of the growth in higher education do however provide opportunities, whilst at the same time creating discriminatory conditions. Thus, women's career experiences in this sector were adversely affected by the unchanging male-domination in organisational cultures and social attitudes towards women's place at work and in social life.

The study has important policy implications. Some rebalancing of institutional regulation is necessary in the form of legal intervention outlawing direct and indirect discrimination. The pressures on these patterns lie in Turkey's current status as a candidate for European Union membership. These pressures may provide some push for legislative and structural reform. However, the experience of the UK would suggest that legislation is necessary, but does not on its own challenge institutional discrimination. Further, the slow pace of social and domestic structures emulating and adapting to changes in women's career and economic activity patterns, bodes ill for radical transformation.

It is not possible to predict the degree of change that might emerge in the field of equality. However, civil organisations are gaining power and influence in the socio-political life in Turkey, following their successful organisation and campaigns in the aftermath of two major earthquakes in 1999. YÖK, too, has a significant role to play in challenging different forms of institutional discrimination in the university sector particularly in the east of the country which is relatively remote from the liberating environment and republican politics of the universities which are in the large cities of western Turkey. Although equal opportunities have been so far supported by the national level policies, these policies have not been translated into written policy statements. YÖK could demonstrate its commitment to sex equality by promoting formal equal opportunities rules and supporting these as good practice throughout the sector via institutional mechanisms. At the national and local level, it is also possible that the return to the tradition of core values of republican and democratic ideals of Turkey may well be the uniting principle.

The means of transformation may also lie with women themselves, their awareness of discriminatory structures and the will to challenge gendered organisational cultures. In conclusion, the analysis suggests that senior women academics need to work to retain their positions by engaging politically at both organisational and national level, but the findings indicate that this interpretation is not widely shared.

6 References

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