

HEADSCARF BAN AND DISCRIMINATION:

PROFESSIONAL HEADSCARVED WOMEN IN THE LABOR MARKET

Dilek Cindođlu



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Preface

The headscarf ban applied in institutions of higher education, in the public sector, and as this research has shown, in the private sector, reveals the perspectives of the state and its institutions and as well of the society on human, women's and citizens' rights. The restrictions and barriers to entry of women to study and work in institutions of higher education and public sector institutions, in place since the 1960s, rest on a mentality that views women's choices to wear headscarves as an attack on the secular regime, instead of treating their choices as a manifestation of their freedom of religion and belief. Consequently, the practices that were initially violating freedom of belief gradually deteriorated to cause further violations of rights to education, to employment, to equal access to public life and of basic rights and liberties such as the right to equality.

The headscarf ban in institutions of higher education has for many years been and remains to be a widely debated and contested issue. Though there is a wealth of analysis, dialogue, debate and research on the subject, it is largely restricted to whether the headscarf ban in universities is justified or not. The impact that the ban has had on headscarved women's lives have, on the other hand, been absent in the debates and analyses on the headscarf ban. A question that has not been featured in research and public debates so far is despite the public sector ban on the headscarf what are the experiences of those headscarved women at work who were able to graduate from university, but did not abandon their choice to wear headscarf to practice their faith and without? In other words, what is the impact of the headscarf ban in the public sector on the professional lives of higher educated headscarved women? Does this ban, which applies to public sector institutions, also hinder or restrict professional headscarved women as they apply for or work in private sector jobs? What obstacles are there for professional headscarved women to entering job markets in Turkey and to advancing their careers?

This report is a product of TESEV Democratization Program's quest to answer these questions. It examines one of the greatest roadblocks on Turkey's path to democratization, the headscarf ban, and the implications of the ban on public and private sector employment to document the myriad forms of discrimination and rights violations that headscarved women face immediately after they decide to become working professionals. Though some forms of workplace discrimination

that headscarved women face also affect non-headscarved professional women with similar socio-economic backgrounds, the headscarf is the primary source of the majority of discrimination faced by professional headscarved women. Again, this report shows that the ban on the public sector spilled over to the private sector. Cases of discrimination and rights violations that are believed to have diminished and to even have been reversed in favor of headscarved women during the two terms of the AK Party administration continue to be recorded, especially and more vehemently in the private sector.

It must be emphasized here that this is not a research on women's employment. Neither is it a research that seeks to identify the different forms of discrimination against professional women. Though there certainly are various forms of discrimination that professional and non professional women face in labour markets in Turkey, past research has already uncovered these cases of discrimination. This report, which falls under TESEV Democratization Program's thematic area of religion-state-society relations, attempts to identify the discriminatory practices and obstacles that *headscarved* professional women face during their professional lives due to the *headscarf ban*.

TESEV Democratization Program will generate and launch a report offering a democratic and equality-based solution to the headscarf ban in the coming months.

TESEV Democratization Program

Introduction

The main purpose of this research is to understand in a sociological framework the mechanisms of discrimination experienced by professional headscarved women in Turkey in 2010 while entering and staying in job markets. Since the 1980s, the headscarf ban has had direct and indirect impacts on headscarved women in higher education and professional jobs. But the scholarship on women and employment in Turkey has not yet discussed the effects of the ban. The right to education and employment is a fundamental constitutional right of citizens in modern societies. The headscarf ban not only prevents the exercise of a most fundamental citizenship right, but also restricts the participation of headscarved women in business life. The present research, therefore, seeks to understand the effects of the headscarf ban on women's participation in working life.

Following in the footsteps of the research, this study has adopted the intersectionality approach and the grounded theory methodology to zoom in on the various experiences professional headscarved women have in job markets in Turkey in the year 2010 discussing the consequences of the headscarf ban in the business world. The objective is to make an effort to understand the effects of the ban through a theoretically and methodologically holistic perspective.

Intersectionality is a relatively new approach that calls for attention to the intersections of the different social situations between social strata, and suggests that over generalizing social analyses needs to be avoided in place of focusing on the particulars of social needs as understood in a holistic perspective. In terms of methodology, grounded theory has been preferred, in order to provide a holistic analysis. Accordingly, this research is constructed with the grounded theory approach and intersectionality perspective simultaneously.

The fieldwork for this study was conducted between December 2009 and June 2010. It comprises 12 face-to-face interviews, 5 group interviews, and 10 focus group interviews with male and female opinion leaders, married / single / employed / unemployed women wearing the headscarf who have professional jobs, and with men married to headscarved women who are professionals. The interviewees were contacted through NGOs and informal channels with snowballing technique in urban Ankara, Istanbul and Konya. A total of 79 women and 25 men were interviewed throughout.

While this research finds that the headscarf ban has a direct adverse effect on the employment of headscarved women, it also shows that the prohibition to have a government job is not the only obstacle these women face. The ban, as a matter of fact, spills over to various layers, creating waves of consequences concerning job markets, and the “visibility” of headscarved women in private companies serves a prohibitive function in terms of (1) recruitment, (2) wage policies, (3) work performance and (4) promotions. In addition, the public and private spheres are in quite close interaction particularly when it comes to the employment of women. Professional headscarved women are further denied or restricted access to job markets as a result of various pressures and expectations borne out of both the job markets themselves and a particular notion of family that rests on traditional roles concerning the domestic division of labor and on patriarchal patterns. A female professional, if not working because she could not find a job, thinks that she is not being given her fair share of respect and esteem in the family, and her desire to enter the public sphere thus gets stronger rather than diminishing.

Consider a journalist wearing the headscarf: If she wants to pursue political news, the settings she will be allowed to access will be limited as a result of the ban. Or consider a woman pharmacist who operates her own pharmacy: If she will do business with government organizations, her presence in meetings as a headscarved woman will invite trouble. By the same token, a headscarved sociologist working in a think-tank is rather asked to stay in the office instead of going to conferences.

The main finding of this study is that the headscarf ban in the public sector has direct and indirect effects over practices in the private sector. Working conditions in professional jobs are very different from those in blue-collar and pink-collar jobs. Professional employees do not relate to a limited number of individuals and organizations located in a certain place; they need to remain in contact with several individuals and organizations over the course of their work. Therefore, the ban in the public sector prejudices the private sector, as well. To illustrate the point, consider a journalist wearing the headscarf: If she wants to pursue political news, the settings she will be allowed to access will be limited as a result of the ban. Or consider a woman pharmacist who operates her own pharmacy: If she will do business with government organizations, her presence in meetings as a headscarved woman will invite trouble. By the same token, a headscarved sociologist working in a think-tank is rather asked to stay in the office instead of going to conferences. The ban could accordingly be said to have such a “spillover effect”.

Additionally, headscarved women working professional jobs are being asked to remain “invisible” at the workplace due to the “spillover effect” of the ban.

The findings of this study on the ban and its spillover effects lead to a number of conclusions at specific levels:

At the level of women wearing the headscarf, the headscarf ban is cause for trouble in terms of having a government job; performing one’s job at work; getting a job, advancing through the ranks and being promoted at a private company. In cases where the ban in the public sector reflects onto the private sector through the “spillover effect”, fewer professional headscarved women participate in job markets. In a society where educated women are not allowed access to the labor force, the creativity, productivity and solution-oriented thinking that come with the female labor force cannot be taken advantage of. Moreover, in a world where women are unable to join the labor force, there is no chance of shifting the balance in women’s favor in terms of the traditional, domestic division of labor characterized by a male-dominant nature, where the role assigned to the woman is supporting the man by taking care of household chores while he provides for the family.

It is also obvious that private businesses keep headscarved women out of labor markets or employ them in underpaid positions of an invisible nature, and thereby hold sway over wages to the disadvantage of women in general, and of headscarved women in particular. Furthermore, potential social demands of the labor force –such as equal pay for equal work, *half-time work*, maternal leave–come to be easily disregarded due to women’s decreasing participation in job markets. Because these social rights have more of a chance to proceed to the agenda in public or corporate companies, and given that headscarved women are mostly employed in small-sized businesses or self-employed, they have trouble accessing the rights that will keep them in job markets.

Although there are several studies covering women’s employment and the decrease in women’s participation in the labor force and employment in Turkey, this research has had difficulty explaining that decrease qualitatively (Report by the State Planning Organization of the Turkish Prime Ministry and World Bank, 2009). In addition, the common denominator of the field studies conducted by various organizations on the headscarf issue is that, conservatively speaking, no less than 60% of women and about 16% of women with university degrees are wearing some type of headscarf in Turkey (Çarkoğlu, 2009; KONDA2008; METROPOLL, 2008).

The present study argues that the headscarf ban needs to be considered not only in terms of women’s human rights, but also in terms of the representation of women in the labor market.

Chapter I explains the theoretical and methodological framework that sets the basis for the fieldwork and the research question. A detailed discussion is offered in terms of the grounded theory approach to describe the phases, universe, and sampling of the fieldwork, which was completed in November 2009. Profiles of the men and headscarved women who participated in the study will be discussed in compliance with the principles of confidentiality.

Chapter II offers an analysis of the social and political context of the study with respect to professional headscarved women. Processes in which the women participate in business life and the history of the headscarf ban are treated under separate sections.

Chapter III takes up at some length instances of discrimination suffered by professional headscarved women while entering the public sphere and thereafter. Women wearing the headscarf can face discrimination at various levels in business life. Discrimination is witnessed in recruitments, professional association memberships, job performances and promotions.

Chapter IV discusses the social expectations of parents, spouses and close friends of professional headscarved women. Contrary to our assumptions, a significant number of the women we talked with had conflicts with their families on where and when they would wear the headscarf. Considering the headscarf an obstacle before their daughters' education and employment, families asked their children to give priority to education and expected them to postpone wearing the headscarf. Moreover, when one looks at their relations with traditional roles arising from gender roles, professional headscarved women are seen to emphasize their role as mothers, but do not understand that role as hindering their employment as women, and instead adopt, by referring to religion, an approach which suggests that women are not prohibited from working.

Although professional women have repeatedly stated that "they had no plans to stay home", they face a discourse which deters them from working on the grounds that "they have no obligation to provide for the family" and "their most important duty as a woman is to be a mother", a discourse mediated through a rhetoric produced out of the piety of headscarved women when it comes to gender roles in the family. Nevertheless, nearly all of the unemployed professional headscarved women we interviewed are actively involved in at least one volunteer organization, which is a sign that these women have a hard time agreeing to the traditional housewife ideology.

Chapter V discusses how the headscarf ban spills over to the private sector due to the way business life is structured. One of the essential findings of the present study, offered in Chapter V, is that it is extremely difficult to distinguish between public and private sectors especially when it comes to employment in

professional jobs. As argued in the context of certain illustrative jobs, the public and the private sectors are not independent from each other. In reference to the spillover effect of the headscarf ban in the public sector on the private sector, the study finds that the obstacles women face in processes of employment are not limited to the inability to access public workplaces: that headscarved women are “banned” has significant repercussions in the context of private companies with respect to (1) recruitments, (2) wage policies, (3) appointments and (4) promotions.

As with any research project, this study has benefited immensely from the contributions of institutions and organizations, individuals, personal friends, and NGOs that had faith and trust that this was a considerable and significant undertaking. Without their support, this report would not have seen daylight. For all that they contributed throughout the duration of this study, I would like to extend my thanks to the Executive Board and the Supreme Advisory Board of the Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (TESEV), TESEV Chairman Can Paker, Open Society Foundation, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Turkey, Capital City Women’s Platform, Women’s Rights Association Against Discrimination (AKDER), Human Rights Research Association (İHAD), the Association of Human Rights and Solidarity for Oppressed People, İlke Association for Science, Culture and Solidarity, Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research (SETAV), Women’s Affairs Division of the Justice and Development Party Head Office, Youth Affairs Division of the Istanbul Office of the Justice and Development Party, Women’s Affairs Division of the Felicity Party, Association for Freedom of Thought and Education Rights (ÖZGÜR-DER), Independent Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association (MÜSİAD), Journalists and Writers Foundation (GVY), Center for Legal Support for Women (KAHDEM), Foundation for Education, Solidarity and Research in Konya (EDAV), Konya Betül Association for Friendship and Environment, my former students Dr. Edip Bekaroğlu, Associate Professor Murat Çemrek and Esra Bekaroğlu and Rabia Çemrek, my doctoral students Şule Yaylacı and Feyda Sayan-Cengiz, and my former friends and colleagues Süheyla Pınar-Alper, Fatih Erten and Fatma Sakarya.

I am also grateful to all the academics who attended workshops and closed sessions to contribute to the study ever since its inception. Because the sessions were closed, I am unable to reveal their identities. But with their challenging and inspiring questions, they sometimes made me ponder for weeks. It is my hope that I am able to answer at least some of their questions with this report.

Dilek Kurban and the TESEV Democratization team exercised incredible patience and diligence in taking care of all the organizational aspects of the study, locating the participants, planning meetings and travels and every other detail. Without them, the study would not have come into being in such a short period

of time. I couldn't afford to not acknowledge Ebru İlhan: All plans were brought to completion as scheduled thanks to the scholarly mind, experience and sharp intellect as well as the excitement and hard work of this young friend of mine. Not only as project officer but also as voluntary project assistant, she joined me in all the meetings in Ankara, Konya and Istanbul, some of which started way too early in the morning and lasted far too long. I cannot help mentioning that I was highly impressed by her intellect, experience, smartness and enthusiasm throughout the time I worked with her. Although responsibility for the ideas expressed here ultimately lies with me, it would have been unfair to not acknowledge the support Ebru availed me of. Yet another individual worthy of mention is Adnan Boynukara. He was with me in all times of need. He made life easier for me, sometimes by driving the car after a field visit when I was having trouble with my migraines and at other times by reaching out to the phone when I could not access sufficient number of participants and panicked. I am thankful to him for accompanying me in this academic journey I set out on with some hesitation.

I am, of course, most grateful to all the participants who took this project seriously, respected it, spared their time and opened up a slice of their lives to me. This project could not have been undertaken if professional headscarved women had not shared their subjective experiences in interviews and meetings in which anger, tears, and smiles all had their fair share. I never wore a headscarf. But I cannot say that I, as a woman, never experienced discrimination in my professional life. It was perhaps this shared history that allowed us to patiently listen to one another, despite our differences. I am hoping that I was able to describe their circumstances under the guiding light of sociology and in my own words.

At the end of just about every interview, participating women asked me: "Why would a woman like you (i.e. one who does not wear a headscarf and openly says she is not religious) undertake this kind of study?" I offered the same response every time: "As a woman, mother and scholar, I really would like more women to have a job, to have a chance to access job markets. All the academic scholarship I know of, including my own, shows that when women are actively involved in education and business, they are stronger, better equipped, and have more of a say both in the family, in the society as well as in politics. As professional intellectuals belonging in the first generation of the Turkish Republic, my parents did not dream of a world for me in which I would not be accorded the same equality as men would. And I could imagine for myself and my daughter a world in which women and men are equals only by rendering discrimination visible. That's why I am conducting this study". That's how I think still today.

Longing for a world where women can much more easily leave their marks on all domains of life...

CHAPTER 1

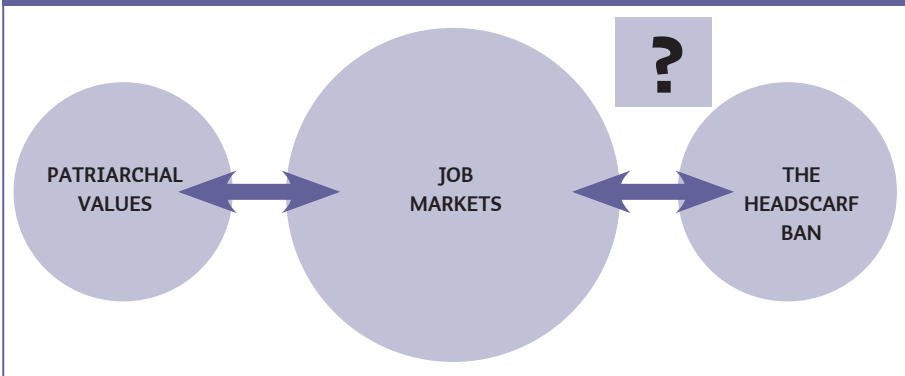
Research Plan and Methodology

1.1. RESEARCH QUESTION

The purpose of this research is to understand the subjective and objective aspects of the mechanisms of discrimination experienced by professional headscarved women in Turkey in 2010 while entering and staying in job markets. In a general sense, the most fundamental factors that keep women out of the job market include (1) internalized patriarchal values and traditional gender roles, (2) gender-based discriminatory and abusive practices in the job market stemming mostly from the established patriarchal values, which discourage women from working. In addition to these factors, this research further analyzes the effects of the headscarf ban on processes of participation by professional headscarved women in the world of business in Turkey, a country where the headscarf ban remains in effect at universities and in government jobs to a large extent.

The main question of the study is what kinds of problems do professional headscarved women encounter while entering and staying in job markets. Although it is not difficult to predict that headscarved women face a series of discriminatory practices not only because they are women, but also because they wear the headscarf, it was still a worthwhile pursuit to inquire into that question for the purpose of understanding the mechanisms through which discriminatory practices are performed.

**Figure 1: Professional headscarved women in Turkey in 2010:
What challenges do they face when entering the job market and staying in the job market?**



Research by independent scholars and polling firms has suggested that approximately 61.2% (Çarkoğlu 2009), 71% (Konda 2008), or 72% (Metropoll 2008) of women in Turkey wear the headscarf. 16.4% of women with a university degree are headscarved (Çarkoğlu 2009).

According to data available on the website of the General Directorate for Women's Status and Problems of the Prime Ministry of Turkey (*Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü, KSGM*), only 6.5% of women hold a college or university degree. Combining these data, one sees that the universe of the present research is a relatively small group equal to 16.4% of that 6.5%. This study, however, zeroes in on the structure of the labor markets, and not on the women *per se*, and focuses on the role the headscarf ban plays in labor markets and how headscarved women deal with the challenges they face.

The 2008 study by Konda further shows that 59.4% of women employees do not wear a headscarf, while 27.2% veil themselves with a “headscarf”, 12.7% with a “turban”, and 0.7% with a “burka”. Some 60% of all women veil themselves with a head covering of some sort, but only 40.6% of headscarved women have a job. That is to say, the percentage of headscarved women with a job is lower than that of women employees who are not headscarved. This difference by itself offers a hint as to the effects of the headscarf ban.

Following in the footsteps of the few studies discussing the consequences of the headscarf ban in the business world, this study has adopted the intersectionality approach and the grounded theory methodology. The objective is to make an effort to understand the effects of the ban through a theoretically and methodologically holistic perspective. Intersectionality is a new sociological approach that calls for attention to the intersections of the different social situations between social strata, and suggests that generalizing social analyses be avoided (Davis 2008).

Particularly in the sociological literature on labor markets, intersectionality offers a theoretical approach that presents important clues to understanding existing inequalities. Socially disadvantaged groups are stranded in the lowest ranks of the labor markets in terms of status and income. Scholarship seeking to understand economic inequalities in Western societies has utilized the intersectionality approach as a valid and explanatory theoretical framework. For instance, a black woman is more disadvantaged in labor markets than a black man or a white woman (Browne and Misra 2003). Intersectionality is an appropriate framework to approach the challenges faced by headscarved women in labor markets. It is impossible to conduct comprehensive and detailed analyses covering the entire mass of headscarved women, however, an in-depth examination of the issue is possible if the situations of headscarved women in a specific social strata are considered.

This study is based on interviews with professional headscarved women living in Istanbul, Ankara and Konya who hold a college or university degree. In terms

of methodology, grounded theory has been utilized, assuming that a holistic analysis of the situation could be offered only through that approach.

Grounded theory is an approach first advanced by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in their 1967 book *The Discovery of the Grounded Theory*. Differing radically from the positivist approach, grounded theory is a methodological approach that argues for discovering and developing hypotheses, concepts and facts over the course of field study, instead of testing pre-conceived hypotheses; prefers bottom-up reasoning; pushes for building codes out of data, concepts out of codes, categories out of concepts, and the theory out of the categories, and then returning to data systematically to test findings and arguments.

Deductive and inductive perspectives are deployed simultaneously in this approach, and the unit of analysis is not the individual, but the event or process. Accordingly, this study does not focus on professional headscarved women themselves, but on the effects of the headscarf ban and the processes headscarved women go through in labor markets (Charmaz, 2006, Strauss and Corbin, 1990, and Strauss 1996)

1.2. FIELDWORK

Prior to the fieldwork, one preliminary workshop was organized in each of the two cities, Istanbul and Ankara, with the TESEV team. Researchers, academics, representatives from women's organizations, and headscarved as well as non-headscarved women who have professional jobs gathered in the workshops and offered suggestions concerning the main questions of this study. Some assessments stood out: the observation that headscarved women encounter professional associations over the course of their professional lives and that women holding public-sector jobs who are suspended from their jobs were being re-employed as lower status civil servants. These have confirmed the findings obtained in the field, while the fieldwork enabled us to develop further the hypotheses advanced in the workshops.

During fieldwork, focus groups and one-on-one interviews were performed to talk to headscarved women who hold higher education degrees, have professional jobs, are married or single, did or did not (could not) find employment, as well as to men who were married to the women who constituted the study sample. While attempts were made to access individuals contacted during the fieldwork in urban Ankara, Istanbul and Konya between December 2009 and June 2010 primarily through rights-based NGOs, this did not turn out to be an effective way to convince women to participate in the study. At the second step, calls made through the "snowball" method implemented through former students, acquaintances and friends hit the target.

The field study comprises interviews (12 of them), group interviews (5 of them) and focus group work (10 of them). A total of 79 professional women and 25 men were interviewed. All interviews were conducted jointly by the author and the project assistant. Upon transcription, the interviews were analyzed with the MAXQDA application. Over the course of the research, one focus group meeting was held in each of Ankara and Konya with men married to headscarved women. Similarly, one other group meeting and a one-on-one interview were held in Istanbul. However, this report mostly represents the perspectives and voices of the women. Focus groups held with their spouses were considered supplementary resources to better understand the spouses' relations with women's professional lives and domestic roles, expectations at home and the direct effects of the headscarf ban on daily lives.

During and after fieldwork, researchers met with intellectuals and activists with 'Islamic sensitivities' to evaluate the preliminary field findings. These meetings helped researchers understand how to situate the forms of discrimination encountered by headscarved women within Turkey's economic, social and political transformation. In addition, meetings were also held with individuals or employer representatives from the private sector where discrimination is frequent. These latter meetings were also important in terms of confirming the study's findings. Finally, main arguments of the study were discussed at a closing workshop that was held at the end of the field research and attended mostly by researchers specializing in women's labor, headscarved professionals, intellectuals and academics. Although the study's essential conclusions rely on interviews with the women and men constituting the study sample, other meetings and workshops held before, during and after the fieldwork ensured the integrity of the research and reinforced our confidence in the study itself.

Below is a summary of the self-described basic demographic characteristics of the interviewees:

Family Office Coordinator (Theology)	1
Researcher (EU Specialist)	2
Attorney	7
Banker (Management and Economics)	4
Computer Engineer	1
Biologist	1
Dentist	6

Table 1: Demographic Information – Occupational Distribution of Women Who Participated in Focus Groups or Interviews

Foreign Trade Expert	1
Physician	1
Pharmacist	5
Pedagogue, Member of Municipal Council	1
Household Economist	1
Housewife	7
Journalist	1
Food Engineer	1
News Editor (Journalist)	1
Public Relations Specialist	3
Nurse	1
Communications Specialist	1
Worker (Nurse)	1
Manager-Teacher	1
Qur'an Instructor	1
Accountant	1
Engineer	2
Graduate Student	2
High School Teacher	13
Project Manager (Sociologist)	1
Psychologist	1
Radiology Technician	1
Class Teacher	1
Political Scientist	1
Sociologist	2
NGO Employee (Theology)	1
Medical Secretary	1
TV Employee	1
Publication Manager (Journalist)	1
Executive Consultant (Communications)	1

PARTICIPANT PROFILE	
TABLE 2	Age (Female)
Below 33	35
Above 33	44
TABLE 3	Employment Status (Female)
Employed	56
Unemployed	23
TABLE 4	Sex
Female	79
Male	25
TABLE 5	Marital Status (Female)
Married	59
Single	20
TABLE 6	Education (Female)
Vocational School Diploma	1
University Degree	69
Graduate Degree	9

AVERAGE AGE: 34.3

AVERAGE NUMBER OF YEARS EMPLOYED: 10.23

FOCUS GROUPS AND GROUP INTERVIEWS

While creating the focus groups, we paid attention to (1) marital status, (2) age and (3) employment status. The group of married women would differ from the group of single women in terms of domestic roles and expectations to be discussed among the two groups. By the same token, currently employed professional women would have different observations and experiences concerning business life than the public sphere relations of professional women who went about their lives as housewives. Finally, we assumed that individuals who completed school before the 28 February era would have different perceptions and experiences than those who were students in the aftermath of that era, when the headscarf ban was most strictly in effect in universities. During the 28 February 1997 military intervention, politicians or political parties were not the only ones facing pressure and coercion; sections of society adopting an Islamic lifestyle also faced them (Özbudun, 2006; Cizre and Çınar 2003). Increasingly obstructive practices during the 28 February era directly prevented headscarved students from entering

through campus gates. In addition to that physical obstruction, psychological barriers were also put before headscarved students. The “conviction rooms” established by the Istanbul University Presidency were among the mechanisms created in this era to deny headscarved students their right to education. Our hypothesis was that headscarved women who were university students in the repressive atmosphere of the post-28-February era would have perceptions and experiences that would differ from those of women who had a relatively easier time as students. Accordingly, the youngest woman to earn a university degree in 1997 would be 33 years old in 2010. This is how the professional headscarved women groups including females above and below 33 years old were formed.

ANKARA

FOCUS GROUP 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER Meeting Room, ANKARA							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ANKARA	Ayşe	34	University	Journalist	Single	Single	12
ANKARA	Fatma	43	University	Teacher	Married	22	12
ANKARA	Selma	36	University	Teacher	Married	13	Unemployed
ANKARA	Filiz	36	University	Pharmacist	Married	16	14
ANKARA	Leyla	40	University	Pharmacist	Married	16	13
ANKARA	Zekiye	45	University	Pharmacist	Married	23	15
ANKARA	Ceydanur	41	University	Mechanical Engineer	Married	-	-
AVERAGE		39.3				18	13.2

We held our first focus group meeting in Ankara. This group was planned to include employed women above 33 years of age. There were pharmacists, teachers and a journalist in the group. True to our expectations, women in this group had experiences as university students before the 28 February era and they faced fewer challenges compared to the aftermath of that era. Nevertheless, the processes they went through in their professional lives were important in terms of laying out the main issues encountered by a group of women who launched themselves into life as headscarved women and had to remove their headscarves to be able to work. Average age was 39, and average number of years in marriage was 18 in the group. Encounters of these women who have been in professional life for an average of 13 years can be analyzed in the following respects:

Pharmacists in the group had it relatively the easiest in the group. Starting pharmacies on their own, these women faced discriminatory language and behavior by some customers, corporate contacts and government offices, but they were nevertheless not prevented from performing their jobs. In reference to their time as government employees or instructors at private educational establishments, the teachers in the group stated, however, that for years they sailed in heavy seas of interrogations, lay-offs, pardons, forced relocations. The difficulties the journalist participant of the group, who had a job as a journalist in a private establishment, went through had a jolting effect on the pharmacists and teachers who listened to them.

FOCUS GROUP 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER Meeting Room, ANKARA							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ANKARA	Şenay	32	University	Teacher	Married	8	Unemployed
ANKARA	Sümeyye	29	University	Public Relations Specialist	Married	5	4
ANKARA	Kezban	31	University	Engineer	Married	6	Unemployed
ANKARA	Feyza	23	University	Sociologist	Single	Single	Unemployed
ANKARA	Sevim	35	University	Attorney-Housewife	Single	14	5
ANKARA	Duygu	30	University	Theology – Arabic, MA, U.K.	Single	Single	Unemployed
ANKARA	Hülya	26	University	Biologist	Married	1	4
ANKARA	Nadide	29	University	Foreign Trade Expert	Married	1	Unemployed
AVERAGE		29.4				5.8	4.3

The second group meeting was also held in the Mazlum-Der meeting room in Ankara. This group was planned to include unemployed professional women below 33 years of age, and the average age turned out to be 29. There were three employed and five unemployed women in the group. Discussions unfolded in terms of unfair practices applied against headscarved women by religiously conservative employers. In particular, unemployed women noted that they were forced to accept lower wages while seeking jobs and working at the jobs they found, a pressure they answered by resigning from their positions. They added that they were not allowed to take any exams held by government institutions, and even when they were allowed access, they did not bother taking them knowing that they would not be permitted to work with their headscarves on.

FOCUS GROUP 1, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER Meeting Room, ANKARA

Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ANKARA	Elif	46	University	School of Sciences - Department of Chemistry	Married	22	Unemployed
ANKARA	Gülbahar	45	University	Political Scientist	Married	18	Unemployed
ANKARA	Ayten	36	Vocational School	Medical Records Specialist	Married	17	Unemployed
ANKARA	Zehra	37	University	Attorney	Married	12	Unemployed
ANKARA	Merve	41	University	School of Management	Married	20	Unemployed
ANKARA	Fehime	43	University	School of Political Science	Married	21	Unemployed
ANKARA	Melis	39	University	Attorney	Married	17	Unemployed
ANKARA	Dilber	43	University	Vocational High School (Commerce) and School of Management	Married	20	Unemployed
ANKARA	Hafize	47	University	Household Economist	Married	23	Unemployed
ANKARA	Elfida	38	University	Class Teacher	Married	9	6
AVERAGE		41.5				17.9	6

This group in Ankara was planned to be composed of unemployed women above 33 years of age. The resulting average age was 41.5, only one participant was employed at the time. Average number of years in marriage was 17.9 in the group.

Women in this group mainly related the challenges and family conflicts they faced over the course of finding a job upon graduation. They also shared the responsibilities they assumed in non-paid positions in NGOs and their entrepreneurship experiences. They told that just about no-one around them paid attention to them and put them in the same basket as other housewives, because they were both headscarved and unemployed.

FOCUS GROUP 2, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER Meeting Room, ANKARA							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ANKARA	Firuze	27	Sociologist	Researcher (SETA)	Married	2.5	3
ANKARA	Şükriye	30	Theology, Ph.D. in progress	Family Office Coordinator (Religious Affairs Directorate)	Married	5	6
ANKARA	Şahnur	29	University	Municipality	Married	3	7
ANKARA	Ceren	29	School of Communication	Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms (IHH)	Single	0	3.5
AVERAGE		28.8				3.5	4.9

This group comprised employed women below 33 years of age. Average age was 28.8; average number of years in marriage was 2.6. Among the most frequently discussed issues in this group were the barriers before the visibility of women. The group additionally shared the idea that the conservative image accorded by the headscarf provided a level of security in professional life. They told that they had a more respectable communication with their male colleagues thanks to the esteem generated by the headscarves they wore.

ISTANBUL

The two focus groups we created in TESEV's meeting hall in Istanbul included participants who were professionals above 33 years of age.

FOCUS GROUP 1, 3 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ISTANBUL	Asiye	48	University	Pharmacist	Married	27	23
ISTANBUL	Şükran	42	University	Food Engineer	Married	16	6
ISTANBUL	Rojin	33	University	Communications Specialist	Single	Single	5
ISTANBUL	Şaziye	35	University	Sociologist	Married	11	5
ORT		39.5				18	9,8

The second group included employed professionals who were below 33 years of age.

FOCUS GROUP 2, 3 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ISTANBUL	Hande	31	University	Teacher	Married	8	5
ISTANBUL	İnci	29	Theology	Teacher	Single	Single	5
ISTANBUL	Lale	27	Public Relations	Public Sector	Married	1	5
ISTANBUL	Gökçe	31	High School	Nurse	Married	10	8
AVERAGE		29.5				6.3	5.8

In both groups, discussion began with references to practices witnessed during both job seeking and the 28 February era. Various negotiations and conflicts within the family that arose due to the headscarf were among the main issues discussed in these groups in detail.

GROUP INTERVIEW, Television Producers, 6 April 2010, Facilities of a TV Network, ISTANBUL							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ISTANBUL	Halime	30	School of Communication	Editor	Married	3	9
ISTANBUL	Sena	30	School of Communication	Producer	Married	8	9
AVERAGE		30				5.5	9

GROUP INTERVIEW, Interest-Free Banking Employees, 7 April 2010, Bank Facilities, ISTANBUL							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ISTANBUL	Gülbahar	36	Computer Engineering	Computer Engineer	Married	3	12
ISTANBUL	Gülben	35	Economics	Banker	Married	7	13
ISTANBUL	Gülçin	32	Management	Banker	Married	10	9
ISTANBUL	Macide	33	Economics	Banker	Married	10	12
AVERAGE		34				7.5	11.5

The most interesting aspect of this group interview was that participants hosted us over lunch in their own facilities, that is, in their offices in smart towers that are the new skyscrapers in Istanbul. We had a chance to do a group interview in a private room. This group of young and married women had relatively better professional positions than previous groups. The women in the group were closer to the professional goals they set for themselves, making more money. Thus, theirs was the group in which women felt the least amount of discrimination due to the headscarf and faced the fewest challenges while performing their jobs, although they were employed in a corporate structure.

FOCUS GROUP, 8 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ISTANBUL	Melike	24	Master's Degree	Researcher	Single	Single	1
ISTANBUL	Fatmagül	33	University	Attorney	Single	Single	8
ISTANBUL	Kevser	25	University	Accountant	Single	Single	Unemployed
ISTANBUL	Feride	35	University	Attorney	Married	11	Unemployed
ISTANBUL	Ferzan	30	University	Attorney	Married	3	5
AVERAGE		29.4				7	4.7

This group was also planned to include unemployed women below 33 years of age. However, it turned out that only two of the participants were unemployed, while the other three were employed. While three women were single, two of them were married. Probably, memories of their university years were quite fresh given their ages, and since the group also included unemployed women, the public space common to both – university campus – had a central place in the discussions.

FOCUS GROUP, WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS, 9 April 2010, MÜSİAD, ISTANBUL							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ISTANBUL	Ayşe	38	University	Project Manager	Single	Single	16
ISTANBUL	İncilay	30	University	Executive Consultant	Single	Single	11
ISTANBUL	İnci	42	Master's Degree	Publication Manager	Married	11	24
ISTANBUL	Gaye	37	University	Pharmacist	Married	13	14
AVERAGE		36.8				12	16.3

The commonality in this group was that all women were entrepreneurs. Each was an entrepreneur in her respective specialty. Accordingly, the essence of the discussion related more to their methods of dealing with the perceptions and attitudes of the institutions and individuals they were in contact with, rather than their workplace’s attitude to the headscarf. Average age in this group was 36.8, half of the participants being married and the other half single.

KONYA

GROUP INTERVIEW, 7 May 2010, Mevlevi Sofrası Restaurant, KONYA							
Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
KONYA	Dürdane	34	University	Dentist	Married	13	12
KONYA	Pakize	30	University	Dentist	Married	7	7
KONYA	Pembegül	35	University	Dentist	Married	9	11
KONYA	Perihan	34	University	Dentist	Married	11	12
KONYA	Pelin	35	University	Dentist	Married	14	14
KONYA	Petek	35	University	Dentist	Married	13	13
KONYA	Hicran	25	Master’s Student	International Relations Specialist	Single	Single	Unemployed
KONYA	Sabiha	27	Master’s Student	International Relations Specialist	Single	Single	-
KONYA	Safiye	25	University	Teacher	Married	1	3
KONYA	Saadet	34	University	Housewife	Married	7	Unemployed
AVERAGE		31.4				9.4	10.3

The first group in Konya was made up of employed women below 33 years of age. Majority of group members were actively working dentists who knew one another and were involved in organizational activities together. Not surprisingly, the dentists led the course of the group discussion.

FOCUS GROUP, 8 May 2010, Selçuk Hotel, KONYA

Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
KONYA	Saliha	45	Master's Degree	Radiology Technician	Single	Single	18
KONYA	Nalan	43	University	Manager-Teacher	Married	19	18
KONYA	Sare	37	University	Teacher	Married	15	15
KONYA	Nihan	39	Master's Degree	Attorney	Married	18	Unemployed
KONYA	Duriye	34	University	Instructor	Married	10	7
KONYA	Sedef	46	University	Teacher	Married	24	14
KONYA	Seldanur	38	University	Teacher	Married	15	8
AVERAGE		40.3				16.8	13.3

The second group was mainly composed of teachers above 33 years of age. This group helped us to understand and discuss the professional obstacles faced by women who started their teaching careers before the 28 February era.

FOCUS GROUP, 8 May 2010, Mevlevi Sofrası Restaurant, KONYA

Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
KONYA	Pınar	25	Master's Degree	Student	Single	Single	Unemployed
KONYA	Sevda	23	University	No response	Single	Single	Unemployed
KONYA	Sevtap	29	University	Teacher	Married	5	5
KONYA	Nilgün	40	University	Teacher	Single	Single	19
KONYA	Gülbanu	25	University	Banker	Single	Single	2
KONYA	Gönül	36	University	Qur'an Instructor	Married	6	5
AVERAGE		29.7				5.5	7.7

This group also mainly included participants below 33 years of age, mostly with a teaching job. Though participants were young, they began wearing the headscarf at young ages and they went through serious trouble during high school and university years due to their scarves.

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS, 26 March 2010 - 6 June 2010, ANKARA, ISTANBUL, KONYA

Province	Pseudonym	Age	Education	Profession	Marital Status	Years Married	Years Employed
ANKARA	Mülakat	43	University	Psychologist	Married	21	16
ANKARA	Hatice	36	University	Physician	Married	11	-
ISTANBUL	Nazan	27	University	Teacher	Single	Single	5
ISTANBUL	Müjde	34	University	Web Design	Married	5	10
ISTANBUL	Dilem	32	University	NGO	Single	Single	6
KONYA	Hayriye	-	University	Theology	Married	7	0
ISTANBUL	Ayşe	34	Master's Degree	Attorney	Single		13

1.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This research, like all others, has certain limitations. The fact that this research was not conducted by a headscarved social scientist who is part of the practicing Muslim community might have had an impact on the level of comfort at which the participants opened themselves up. One might claim that headscarved women would have talked more comfortably in a field study carried out by such a social scientist, and such a study would, therefore, have had a deeper grasp of the social reality.

In addition, this is a qualitative study. While they offer hints as to the applicability of generalizations of the findings, qualitative studies do not offer absolute conclusions. Accordingly, the findings in this study do not generalize as to how widespread discrimination against professional headscarved women in job markets is, but rather point to the types of discrimination, and the mechanisms through which and the ways in which they are experienced. Nevertheless, conclusions offered in this study and others like it may help shape hypotheses to be tested in another study designed to measure the prevalence of the findings. For instance, research to date on the headscarf has not considered instances of discrimination in business life resulting from the headscarf ban. In order to understand the prevalence of the findings reached in this study, quantitative research must be carried out. It is our hope that this study paves the way for them.

1.4. RESEARCH ETHICS: SOME ADDITIONAL REMARKS

I conducted this research as a woman who has never worn a headscarf. That I have never done so was a cause of concern for me, indeed. I was worried that a number of headscarved women would be questioning me. What I found surprising, however, was that during the brief encounters I had throughout the fieldwork with headscarved women, they gave utmost importance to mutual respect. Perhaps a most fundamental sign of individualization was the ability to maintain some distance to all our other identities.

First off, let me thank you for saying “headscarf” and avoiding “turban” when you began. Some people imposed the word “turban” upon us, and they just kept referring to it as such. What I wear is a headscarf, that’s what I veil myself with. (Leyla, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, ANKARA)

The locations and times referred to in this report are true to fact. Participants, however, are called by pseudonyms. Although participating women often suggested that we use their real names, I chose not to do so, because I did not consider it appropriate in my capacity as a social scientist. It is my hope that this study will encourage professional headscarved women to pen their own stories.

CHAPTER 2

Social and Political Context: Headscarf in Labor Markets in Turkey in 2010 and the “Turkish Puzzle”

In 2010, only 21.6% of women older than 16 participated in the labor market in Turkey. What is more, this rate has been falling over the years (State Planning Organization of the Turkish Prime Ministry, World Bank, 2009)

A distinction is necessary between rural and urban settings when one considers the history of women’s participation in the labor market in Turkey. Women have at all times been a source of free agricultural labor in the family. Women become wage earners in labor markets as a result of immigration to cities. A woman’s labor becomes paid labor outside the family only after a stringent process. Unlike domestic labor in a rural context, in order for a woman to be able to participate in urban labor markets, a number of social support mechanisms must operate to help with the woman’s responsibilities arising from the domestic division of labor, and especially men need to develop a more egalitarian notion toward the otherwise male-dominant perception of domestic division of labor. In short, radical cognitive shifts are required at the social level so that women can join the business world in the urban environment.

It is argued that a “U curve” will represent the labor market transformation of women in populations migrating from the village to the city in developing countries. While women are employed at high rates in rural areas, during the initial state of immigration to urban areas, women will need to stay home for a certain time, and thus cannot join the labor force. After a while, however, they will adapt economically and socially to the conditions (by getting professional training, becoming literate etc.), equip themselves with necessary skills and look for jobs, and women’s employment will increase as a result. But the situation in Turkey is incompatible with this expectation. That increase in women’s employment does not ever materialize, on the contrary, a slow decline is the case (Hoşgör, 2008).

One of the most recent studies on women’s participation in the labor force is the report No. 48508-TR entitled *Women’s Participation in Labor Force in Turkey 2009*, issued jointly by the State Planning Organization of Turkish Prime Ministry

and the World Bank. The report offers a detailed review of research on women's employment published until 2009 in Turkish and English languages, and an analysis of women's employment based on figures issued by State Statistics Institute. According to the report, the following are the most significant factors that generally impede women's participation in job markets: (1) women's lack of access to educational opportunities, (2) responsibilities and obstacles arising from traditional roles in the family, (3) early marriage and (4) having multiple children. Additionally, the report suggests that (1) society is recently evolving toward a positive perception of working women, (2) women are increasingly more educated, (3) women have now begun marrying later, (4) fertility rates have been dropping. But the report finds it surprising that the percentage of women who currently have a job or are looking for one in Turkey, despite the factors mentioned above, is decreasing. The decrease, according to report, can be explained with reference to 1) urbanization, and 2) the decline in agricultural employment. The percentage of women participating in the labor force in Turkey dropped from 34.3% to 21.6% in the last two decades. (State Planning Organization of Turkish Prime Ministry, World Bank, 2009)

The 'Turkish puzzle' presented in the State Planning Organization's report suggests that while women's participation and demands for participation in the labor market are growing in both OECD countries and Muslim-majority countries, the trend has been downward in Turkey in the past two decades.

Undoubtedly, social support represents the most significant missing piece in this puzzle. Women's responsibilities arising from traditional family roles keep them away from joining the paid job markets. Domestic care responsibilities, including first of all motherhood, are among the main obstacles before women's leaving their homes. The decline from 34% to 22% in women's employment in the last two decades can be explained with reference to the lack of social support necessary to deal with what these roles entail. However, in the case of women who have professional jobs and hold university degrees, the drop is from 80.3% to around 70% in employment, which might suggest that a piece of the puzzle is indeed missing. There has also been a decrease in the number of women who have professional jobs and are able to obtain childcare or senior care services from the market or within their families.

It also goes without saying that the headscarf ban is yet another factor, an underdiscussed one, preventing women from joining the labor force. This research seeks to understand the participation of professional women in the labor force in its peculiar political and historical dynamics, and to thereby locate one of the missing pieces of the puzzle.

2.1. HEADSCARVED WOMEN IN PROFESSIONAL JOBS: “HEADSCARF BAN” AS THE PUZZLE’S MISSING PIECE

The headscarf issue in Turkey has generally been treated within the framework of the broader parameters of Turkish modernization, and universities have been represented as the context where the debate is focused. Research on the phenomenon has mostly focused on the role the headscarf plays in the identity construction processes of university students or recent university graduates (Acar, 1990; Göle, 1991; İlyasoğlu, 1994; O’Neil, 2008). The present study, however, concerns the effects of the headscarf ban on the professional lives of women upon their graduation from university.

In addition to contributing to the growing academic debate on the headscarf and veiling, this study further aims to add to the literature on women’s participation in professional life and how that participation affects and is affected by relations in the family. Considering the transitions between professional and family lives, the study pursues the effects of discriminatory practices in one domain on the other. Almost all study participants noted that there were no working women in their families prior to their own generation. This has offered insight as to how women’s foray into the world of labor is initially negotiated within the bounds of the family.

Veiling has been a central point of contention during the 1980s and afterwards between the Islamic and secular segments of society. In the pre-1980 era, too, there were references to veiling as part of Turkey’s changing political and social context (Saktanber and Çorbacioğlu, 2008). The issue has occupied the political center stage thanks to the involvement of Islamist political parties in politics, the presence of veiled students on university campuses after the 1980s, and the “turban” ban on campus and demonstrations protesting the ban. As a result, the debate has been couched in the context of the headscarf as representative of Islamic identity.

Because arguments on veiling have a central place in politically polarized debates on the issue, they remain restricted by the parameters applicable to political splits. Academic exchanges on veiling revolve around the question “veiling is an objection to what?”. Two trends have been identifiable in the debates. One approach argues that veiling is an objection to the secular modernization and Westernization project of the Republic. This is an approach based on the expectations generated by theories of modernization: Urbanization, education, women’s increasing participation in labor force will subdue the traditional and Islamic structures and identities existing in society, and as a result women will be liberated. In this perspective, veiling prevents women from being liberated and is considered a symbol of pressures exerted on women on the basis of religion (Arat, 1998).

Contrary to modernization theory, another approach points to the possibility of imagining an alternative modernity that builds on non-Western codes. This approach argues that veiling is a modern phenomenon in that it reflects an Islamic way of life in contemporary times, and claims that headscarved women represent a protest against loading the concept of “civilization” with Western-based content (İlyasoğlu, 1994), as well as against the West’s domination of “lifestyle” (Göle, 1991). In Göle’s view, the turban and veiling both keep the woman in a “private” space while she is in public and thereby facilitate her presence there, and serve as a sign of protest against the image of the docile and repressed Muslim woman (1991). İlyasoğlu argues in the same vein that a headscarved woman, in her capacity as a woman with a “headscarved identity”, turns inside out the definition of modernity by appearing in education and professional life, domains otherwise coded as “modern”, in that capacity (1994). Studying the everyday survival strategies of professional women living in Bursa, Öztimur (1999) focused on how demands for an Islamic way of life are being negotiated within the family. Bayramoğlu (2006) has studied the cognitive building blocks of religious and secular individuals over the course of the democratization process, and refers to the dual-modernizing effect of religious devotion and in particular veiling for women. According to Bayramoğlu, women’s appearing in the public sphere thanks to veiling, with the experiences they gain there, results in the veil creating an “Islamic modernization” effect in both the private and the public spheres. The fact that the headscarf is considered not a matter of traditional codes of honor, but only “a religious requirement and a Divine injunction” is seen as a sign of that modernization. The veil thus goes beyond serving as a symbol automatically defining an attitude toward identity and turns into a religious and personal symbol, which shows that while the headscarf serves as a conveyor of identity, it loses its function of being the building block of such identity. This leads to the conclusion that the religion-individual (the person) connection becomes as important as the religion-identity connection (Bayramoğlu 2006: 74). Similar findings supporting this line of thinking emerged in the study by Çarkoğlu and Toprak. When asked why they wear the headscarf, 72% of women responded that “because it is commanded by Islam” (Çarkoğlu and Toprak 2006).

The studies referred to above focused on the headscarved women themselves, and in fact emphasized the individual-identity connection in discussing the relationship between the veil and identity. The literature offers a limited number of works concerning the processes in which headscarved women become part of business life. For instance, the field study conducted by Güveli and Kadı on the social, political and psychological effects of the headscarf ban on headscarved women in Turkey finds that various survival strategies are adopted by women in the world of labor. The study compares the employment situations of women who take off their veils (in places where the ban is in effect), put on wigs, and

do not take off their headscarves in the face of the ban. Only 54% of those who do not unveil, 73% of those who wear a wig, and 72% of those who take their headscarves off in prohibited places have responded that they were able to find a spot for themselves in business life. Considering these findings, it is quite obvious that headscarved women have a difficult time surviving in business life unless they take their headscarves off or use a wig (Güveli and Kadi, 2007).

This research, however, focuses on processes in which professional women join the job markets, the structure of the markets, and the survival strategies women develop in these mechanisms.

2.2. HEADSCARF BAN: A BRIEF HISTORY

If we consider some major turning points in the brief history of the headscarf ban, legal and practical ebbs and flows are generally seen to be the case, with day-to-day politics constantly seeking to shape the practices with which the headscarf ban is put into effect.

The ban first became visible in Turkey in 1964 when a headscarved student at the School of Medicine at Istanbul University who graduated *summa cum laude* was not allowed to deliver her speech at the graduation ceremony. The first legal arrangement on the ban, however, is dated 1981.

The first-ever Regulations by the Ministry of National Education came out in 1981. The “Regulations Concerning Dress and Attire of Staff and Students in Schools Under the Ministry of National Education and Other Ministries” stipulated the following in regards to the dress code applicable to students attending postsecondary schools under the Ministry of National Education: “a) Female students: Clean, neat, ironed, plain clothes; plain and no high heeled shoes and boots; head uncovered, hair combed flat with a topknot, no headscarves to be worn while in the building of the institution b) Male students: clean and neat clothes and shoes, head to be uncovered while in the building of the institution, no long whiskers and hair, no beard will be grown, moustache, if grown, will be clean, combed and cut so as not to run over the lip. A tie will be worn. In warm weather, a shirt may be worn, while in cold weather a high-neck pullover under the jacket may be put on.” (Official Gazette, 7 December 1981, Issue 17537).

The first Regulations stipulating rules for the dress and attire of headscarved employees working in public jobs was issued in 1982. The “Regulations Concerning Dress and Attire of Employees of Public Institutions and Organizations” took effect in that year (Official Gazette, 25 October 1982, Issue 17849). The document contains provisions that female and male civil servants will have their heads uncovered. Still in the same year, the Regulations issued by the Ministry of National

Education on 22 July 1981 was amended to remove the phrase “postsecondary schools” found in the original text of the document. Following the amendment to Article 21, the text of the Article read as follows: “The provisions of the Regulations shall supersede other provisions put into effect by way of previous regulations with respect to dress and attire in elementary, middle, secondary and equivalent schools”, as a result of which university students were moved outside of the scope of the Regulations (Official Gazette, 24 December 1982, Issue 17908).

In 1982, The Higher Education Council issued its Circular Order concerning dress and attire, which stipulated a “modern dress”. The Circular Order provided that:

- a. All staff and students of institutions of higher education are required to have dress and attire that accord with the revolutions and principles of Atatürk and are of a civilized and modest shape.
- b. All male and female students, including those with foreign nationalities, will wear clean, neat and plain dresses, have their heads uncovered and will not wear a headscarf while in the building of the institution.

Following the date of the Circular Order, students were denied entry to campus at some universities because they were wearing headscarves, while others were subjected to disciplinary action for the same reason at others. In yet others, students continued their education without any troubles (Higher Education Council, Circular Order No. 7327).

Facing increased pressure from students, the Council issued another Circular Order in 1984, which provided that “students may use a modern turban”, and delivered it to presidents of universities. This latter Order contained the following statements:

Following discussions on the Circular Order dated 20 December 1982, majority consensus developed on the opinion that although said Order required female students in institutions of higher education to avoid headscarves, a limited number of female students wore their scarves inside the building, which is a practice that needed to be effectively prevented, but they would however be allowed to wear a modern ‘turban’.

Thus, “turban” enjoyed freedom on university campuses until 1987 (Higher Education Council, Circular Order No. 84.15.527).

In 1987, the Council added subparagraph 7/h to the Student Disciplinary Regulations. This addition prohibited “appearing in classrooms, labs, clinics, polyclinics and aisles of Institutions of Higher Education in any dress and attire other than modern ones”. It also contemplated “disciplinary probation” for violators of the prohibition (Official Gazette, 8 January 1981, Issue 19335). In a

subsequent addition, the Council amended subparagraph 7/h of the Student Disciplinary Regulations as follows:

Modern dress and attire are required in classrooms, labs, clinics, polyclinics and aisles of institutions of higher education (a headscarf or turban *may be used to cover* the hair and neck because of religious beliefs.)

In 1988, “freedom for headscarf and turban” was granted by an article added to the Law on the Higher Education Council. Turkish Grand National Assembly adopted new Additional Article 16 by way of Law No. 3511, which provided as follows:

Modern dress and attire are required in classrooms, labs, clinics, polyclinics and aisles of institutions of higher education. Hair and neck may be covered with a headscarf or turban because of religious beliefs.

After being signed by the President, this law took effect following its publication in the *Official Gazette* (Official Gazette, 27 December 1988, Issue 20032).

In 1989, upon an application by then-President Kenan Evren, the higher courts reviewed the matter again. The Constitutional Court repealed the second sentence of Additional Article 16 which provided that “Hair and neck may be covered with a headscarf or turban because of religious beliefs.”(File No. 1989/1, Decision No. 1989/12; Official Gazette, 5 July 1989, Issue 20216).

The “Student Disciplinary Regulations for Institutions of Higher Education” was amended in 1989, and Subparagraph (h) of the Regulations was annulled. As a result of the amendment to the Regulations, there was no longer any reference to dress and attire (Official Gazette, 28 December 1989, Issue 20386).

In 1990, the Turkish Grand National Assembly passed Law No.3650 to add Article 17 to Law No. 2547 of YOK. Article 17 reads, “at institutions of higher education, there is no dress code so long as students do not wear outfits that are not antithetical to the laws enacted”. The opposition (Republican People’s Party) went to the Constitutional Court to repeal Article 17. The court decided that Article 17 is in accordance with the Turkish constitution.

This result created a short-lived solution for headscarved women. In 1992, the Constitutional Court brought a new interpretation of article 17 stating that the permissibility of outfits would not accommodate wearing of the headscarf for religious reasons.

2.3. CLEARING STUDENTS' DISCIPLINARY RECORDS

1990 saw the adoption of Law No. 3760 concerning the issuing of an amnesty for the dress and attire-related entries in students' disciplinary records. Temporary Article 1 of said law reads as follows: "All disciplinary action taken with regard to dress- and attire-related incidents before the effective date of this Law shall be annulled together with any effects and consequences such actions have heretofore borne."

In 1995, Additional Article 23 of the Law on Higher Education took effect:

Practicum, applied studies, and internship in institutions of higher education can be undertaken in public institutions and organizations as well as equivalent private organizations to be chosen by the student. During the period of the study, the student will be subject to the disciplinary rules applicable in institutions of higher education.

This provision allowed students who were having problems in their home institutions to continue their education at other organizations (Higher Education Council, No. 4111/2).

2.4. CLEARING PUBLIC SERVANTS' DISCIPLINARY RECORDS

With respect to public servants, AK-DER reports state that 5,000 headscarved women were laid off between 1998-2002 on the grounds that they violated the regulations on dress and attire, and some 10,000 of them were forced to resign from their positions. Headscarved women who had jobs in public organizations were mostly interrogated on the grounds of disciplinary rules they did not follow, and removed from their positions (AK-DER).

In 2006, the law concerning the issuing of an amnesty for certain disciplinary records of public servants and other government employees undid the penalties arising from disciplinary violations:

... as well as the disciplinary penalties awarded against current or previous public servants and other government employees as per laws, by-laws and regulations in respect of acts committed between 23 April 1999 and 14 February 2005 have been pardoned together with any consequences (Official Gazette, 4 July 2005, Issue 5525).

Thus, women who were discharged from their jobs until 2005 because they were veiled were able to reclaim their positions. However, since the headscarf ban and the dress and attire regulations remained in effect throughout that process, the pardon only helped greatly those individuals who chose to take their headscarves off. A teacher, a nurse, or a public servant who returned to her job thanks to the pardon on disciplinary records would continue to be interrogated and face disciplinary action, and eventually she would be discharged again as long as she continued wearing the headscarf. The pardon, therefore, offered some relief only for those employees who decided to unveil.

The process led to intense debate in newspapers and in academic circles on the dimensions, meaning and limits of the headscarf ban. Questions including the starting point of the public sphere, the endpoint of the private sphere, the dress and attire code to be followed “when receiving service” as a citizen and “when providing service” as a government employee have yielded contentious exchanges, and they still continue to do so.

In sum, the ban is still in effect after all the regulations and amendments; however, in actuality it is being enforced in a limited fashion or fully on university campuses depending on the approach of the university administration in question. While this is in one way considered a ‘relaxing’ or ‘softening’ of the ban, young women who aspire to have university education see the uncertainty and arbitrariness as an on-going cause of concern. The inability to be certain of one’s own place and not knowing what treatment and regulation is awaiting one upon entering the campus are sources of tension and worry, to say the very least, on a daily basis. In public sector jobs, the continuing ban is incomparably stricter than on campus, and rests on different legal and political grounds.

The headscarf is so sensitive an issue that the following words Prime Minister Erdoğan uttered in a press conference was among the main factors that triggered the legal action to shut down the Justice and Development Party (AKP): “Even if you assume that a person wears the headscarf as a political symbol, can you criminalize the headscarf as a political symbol? Can you ban symbols?”. In a focus group meeting, a dentist participant pointed to the opinion that headscarved women wear the headscarf with political motivations and went on: “We are not claiming that women who are not veiled are not veiled because of their political views” (Dürdane, Group Interview, 7 May 2010, Mevlevi Sofrası Restaurant, Konya).

This chapter discussed the two main concerns of this study: Recent developments in the participation of women in job markets in Turkey, and the history of the headscarf ban in the country. Since 1980s, the ban has been the key issue on the agenda of headscarved women who seek to receive postsecondary education and pursue careers in their professions. In addition, there has been a decrease in the rate of women joining the labor force in Turkey in the past 20 years. This study does not purport to establish a causal link between the two concerns, therefore, it will do no more than point to the relationship between the two. The suggestion here is that study findings need to be given consideration in future research on urban women’s labor. Based on the knowledge generated in this study, we can argue that the drop in the employment of women who have professional jobs can be explained in part with reference to the ban. The exact share of the ban in the drop can be identified in future quantitative studies.

CHAPTER 3

Expectations, Prejudices and Barriers: Headscarf in the Public Sphere

We conducted interviews, focus group and group discussions to reveal the structure, form and mechanisms of discrimination encountered by women who have professional jobs. The results of our work can be interpreted on different levels.

First, we should state openly that a monolithic narrative will not suffice to convey the experiences of professional headscarved women. Although these women are similar in that they all are headscarved and professional, they do not share the same worldview, and their assumptions or disagreements about gender roles vary. Contrary to the general opinion of the public, there is a huge diversity among headscarved women, which is one of the main findings of this study running in parallel with previous research on the topic. However, certain patterns do emerge when one looks at their strategies to deal with the headscarf ban.

Considering the strategies devised to grapple with the ban, one sees that while some women have taken their headscarves off to be able to keep their jobs as government employees, other had to put a wig on their headscarves, and yet others did not take off their headscarves and continued to work as such while risking interrogation and discharge from their jobs. And others were fed up with the struggle and gave up working.

The desire to be a professional employed woman is a very strong desire that encourages women to endure all these difficulties. Serious attention needs to be paid to women's eagerness to participate in the public sphere by performing their jobs and join social life with the status their professional life accords them.

3.1. DOES BEING RELIGIOUS PREVENT WOMEN FROM WORKING?

Although public opinion claims that religiousness is supportive of more traditional values and a division of labor that rests on a more traditional notion of family, religious culture may in fact be likened to a "toolkit" as suggested by Bartkowski and Read in their study on Muslim women in Texas, U.S. A religious worldview is not a static construct, on the contrary, it is a dynamic process. The specific

tools that will be used out of the kit, the timing and conditions applying to their use will be determined by dynamic social and political processes, that is, by the context (Bartkowski and Read, 2003). For instance, for a religious Muslim woman living in the United States, the headscarf may play a role that facilitates leaving the house and actively participating in public life.

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When asked about their views on religiousness and women leaving the home to work and earn money, the participating professional women stressed that their religiousness was no barrier to employment. On the contrary, they noted that religiousness would be compatible with, or even supportive of, them putting their professional qualifications and skills to use for the public good.

For instance, I'll tell you my academic background. I studied biology. I can work in a lab. I got a master's degree as well. I can teach. I can also do a few other things in line with my personality and hobbies, like I am fond of organizing things, I'd like to do things that are good for the people, that's my creation (*fitrat*), and that's the direction I am headed. When I put together my education, personality and creation (*fitrat*), I look at the areas I could have a job in as a woman, but you know, we say things about the man needing to work and the woman not from a religious perspective, yeah, he's going to have to provide for the family, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think theologically I don't think there's that kind of final injunction on that, not like women should never work, what it says is women can work but it is the man who has to provide for the family, and the man should not even touch what the woman earns unless she consents to that, so that's it. That's what I know the Almighty has ordered us (Duygu, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA).

In addition, the fact that a woman is wearing the headscarf does not necessarily mean she would interpret every other aspect of her life from a religious framework. As the participant above said, the mere request by a group of women to work while headscarved is a human rights issue that needs to be considered in its own right. On the other hand, in another research that we conducted on saleswomen with headscarves, the respondents made sure that women and men are different in creation (*fitrat*), their "fitrat" is different, therefore their needs and functions in the society are different. (Cindoglu and Çırakman-Develi, 2009) Women for example have the capacity to become mother, therefore working outside of the

home for long hours are against her creation (*fitrat*)". The discussions around the "fitrat-creation (*fitrat*)" however, took a different toll among professional women.

That creation (*fitrat*) issue you're talking about, I guess what you're saying is that in an Islamic sense the headscarf is a rule we follow with reference to religion. Or I guess what you're saying is that in Islam the woman does not need to work anyways, so what's all your hassle for? Now, Islam may or may not be telling the woman to work, and in fact theologians could issue a fatwa on whether women should work in today's world, but you know, this issue is not really like that for me, see I am headscarved and Muslim, I have a demand like that. When I demand that, you can't really come up and tell me your religion does not require that. It's my own demand (Duygu, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

Religious references drawn from the history of Islam help women to easily situate themselves in professional life. The interviews emphasized that there is no prohibition against women's employment, and references were made to working women in Islamic history to note that there was no punishment against women earning income and on the contrary, her income was even protected from access by her spouse. In this regard, the life story and business dealings of Khadija¹ were frequently referred to: "Creation (*fitrat*) does not tell us to stay home. Khadija was the best merchant of her time" (Zehra, Focus Group 1, 27 March 2010 Saturday, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

When a professional woman comes to a point where she would need to give up both material and social benefits she would have acquired in her job, deep conflicts arise at the individual level as well as within the family. In the face of impositions and requests stemming from everyday life, professional headscarved women seek to join the public sphere in all of the ways not prohibited by religion.

It's right that the idea is that the woman has no responsibility to provide for the family, but if one paycheck is not enough for the family at the present time, and if there is a need for that

[...]

What happened to me is what my husband foresaw. He said, let me have a second job and you really won't need to work, but I see that if you don't work, you won't be comfortable. You won't be comfortable staying home, in some way you have to be occupied with something, you need to produce. That's the kind of person I am, that's really not how I grew up, like I didn't get an education for no reason, or just for hanging my diploma on the wall. I got it so I can do something and contribute to something. Honestly if I make some money, if

1 TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: First person to convert to Islam and first wife of Prophet Mohammad.

I get a job and earn something, I have no plans to leave my paycheck straight at his disposal. I have other plans, that's actually what he told me himself, like, I hope to save a little, donate to some places, people who are needy... also I'd like to be able to return the favors my own family did me, because you know they treated me in a very special way, not that they would need what I would give them, but that's how it is, so creation (*fitrat*) creation (*fitrat*) only takes you so far you know. (Nadide, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

An oft-repeated theme was that there is more to working than just earning money, and that seeing oneself as part of the public sphere was also important. When this issue was raised during the focus group discussion in Konya, professional headscarved women who had different ideas suggested that participation in the labor force was not motivated by economic concerns only. While negotiating the idea of working, they could distance themselves from traditional roles quite a bit when they came to a point where they needed to choose between expectations arising from traditional roles, and their social and political identities. In their words:

Seldanur: Allah does require men to work in certain situations. For instance, if the man makes enough money by himself, then my view of working is not based on economic issues only.

[...]

Saliha: We're not working just to earn a paycheck. I am pursuing a doctorate in the School of Theology. Yet I am a public servant, and I do earn one or two (thousand liras). But if he were to tell me, alright you just stay home and I'll give you what you're making, I won't agree to that. (Focus Group, 8 May 2010, KONYA)

The women placed great emphasis on conveying the knowledge they had, based on a responsibility they consciously felt toward the public as a result of their education and religiousness. What is more, this public responsibility had priority when it clashed with their domestic responsibilities. They noted:

It is not economic concerns alone that motivate me to work. In fact, in Istanbul you can't have one wage earner. Of course I have a sense of responsibility for the public and my spouse, but even though my kids are very young now, coming here was the priority for me today. I would not want to neglect my responsibilities to my husband, but he would not neglect his responsibilities to me, either. In fact, many men want to marry women who work. (Şaziye, Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

These are the words of a woman who wishes to participate in business and social life with her headscarf and become visible as such:

I wanted to work, because if you spend a year at home after graduating from university, you know social responsibility projects and stuff like that bring you

to a certain point and that's it, like I never thought of watching women's shows on TV or doing something like that, I didn't want to do that, and that's why I wanted to have a job, also in certain areas only people with a specific mindset enjoy privileges, and in their view we're the religious fanatics who have nothing to do, I would not want to be like that. Like, seriously I would not want that, and I think people need to work and integrate themselves into social life somehow (Hülya, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, ANKARA)

In sum, our conversations have shown that both employed and unemployed professional women who wear the headscarf consider working and participating in public life important not only in terms of earning a paycheck but also contributing to society. A professional woman staying at home and not participating in public life was a perspective that was given no recognition at all.

3.2. THE HEADSCARF AT SCHOOL

When deciding on the variables concerning participants, we assumed that whether a person attended university before or after 28 February would be important. However, most of the headscarved women we interviewed tried to get their university or postsecondary education while wearing their headscarf and had to fight various pressures over the course of their education due to the headscarf. Except for a few schools known to have a liberal orientation, just about all universities in major cities, including those in Ankara and Istanbul, disallow headscarved students on campus. Some universities, however, can have a "relaxed" attitude from time to time, depending on the orientation of the university president in office. For instance, after the 28 February era, a headscarved student could not even enter the campus of a university in a mid-sized city, while at the time this research was being conducted, headscarved students were allowed to proceed to the buildings where classes were being held. The security officer at the building entrance would direct the headscarved student to the nearest restroom, so that she would either take her headscarf off or put her wig on.

Only a few of the interviewees said they were not headscarved when they went to school, and they chose to put it on upon graduation. Some interviewees led evasive lives as students in relatively more tolerant schools, while others were interrogated and subjected to disciplinary action, and yet others moved to relatively more relaxed schools and completed their studies there. Headscarved women who currently have jobs but could not graduate from university because of the headscarf ban also joined our focus groups

Most of the university graduate women we interviewed did not receive a copy of their diploma from their schools, and simply left with a graduation certificate, never to return to school again. While they were never fully at ease with wearing a wig, women implemented this strategy from time to time.

Seldanur: What is painful is that some individuals, who are females just like us, insist on not understanding us. Consider Necla Arat [...] She came to our university to a conference with Oktay Ekşi to persuade us, they really tried hard to no avail. She was asking “where do you think you’re going, are you going to be a fifth wife to a man who already has four? Nur Serter, in another university, was like that, too. First she was saying “I am the architect of the persuasion rooms”. She was extremely proud of saying that. This is the kind of stuff we can’t really explain to our children tomorrow.

Nihan: When your headscarf is removed, it is as if a part of your body is removed. However hard you try to avoid swallowing that feeling, however hard you try to avoid being pacified and strive to be a part of society, even your fellow women think you’re missing something, as our friend said. They ask you, you’re a headscarved woman, why did you even bother going to school? (Focus Group, 8 May 2010, KONYA)

The feeling of being offended and the disappointment experienced during university years because of the headscarf ban merge with the discrimination encountered in professional life.

Difficulties students faced in the 28 February process could be discussed at further length, but we focus on professional life particularly in this report. Therefore, one could offer the following by way of a summary of this section: the anger, the feeling of being offended and the disappointment experienced during university years because of the headscarf ban merge with the discrimination encountered in professional life. For young professional women, one can say, the ban does not remain a thing of the student’s past, it causes even further pain during professional life. Disgruntled feelings and the anger experienced at early ages and built up since then were expressed not only verbally, but also through long periods of silence, tears, and outbursts of anger during the course of this research.

2 At Istanbul University in 1998, Prof. Kemal Alemdaroğlu and Prof. Nur Serter organized an effort whereby headscarved students who came for enrolment were taken to a small room in which they were being prompted by a group of people including members of the faculty to take their headscarves off. The practice only targeted female students wearing the headscarf, and a video camera and multiple staff members were involved in the process which hundreds of young women encountered prior to enrolment. Though it is no more being implemented, the practice was a milestone in Turkish political history. It was discussed in TV programs, stories and analytical works.

3.3. THE HEADSCARF WHILE LOOKING FOR EMPLOYMENT OR AT WORK

The processes professional headscarved women go through when setting out on business life are multileveled and multidimensional.

Unlike the conditions of women who work as members of the service industry or as factory workers, the day-to-day working environments of professional headscarved women do not limit those women to a single building, or an office where they spend eight hours a day. While a sales associate can spend her entire day in the store, counting items, dealing with customers, packaging stuff or performing preliminary accounting tasks, a woman holding a professional job will need to have face-to-face contact with different individuals in various places where she will be performing her duties as part of her job. Leaving the office during the day to attend a meeting, staying in contact with customers or relevant organizations are all requisites of the job.

3.3.1. EXPERIENCES DURING JOB APPLICATIONS...

The first and most important criterion headscarved women with a university degree look for during their job search is whether an employer will accept them with their headscarf. If times are such that the headscarf ban is not being enforced in the public sector, having a public sector job is perceived by a novice professional woman as the most attractive option, because those jobs offer amenities such as reasonable working conditions, equal pay, retirement security, and health insurance. Nevertheless, having a position as a “public servant” has been problematic especially in recent years, because this will not be an environment where the headscarf will be given recognition, regardless of whether one had a stellar performance in placement exams such as the Public Sector Placement Test (*Kamu Personeli Seçme Sınavı, KPSS*). While the private sector may be offering better working conditions in terms of wages in comparison to the public sector, it also has intense competition in terms of other working conditions, salaries and retirement terms.

The first decision professional headscarved women need to make upon graduation is whether or not they will submit a photo-bearing CV. Sending a photo-bearing CV often amounts to yielding to discrimination at the very outset. However, failing to add the headscarved photo to the CV could result in the job application not being taken seriously or rejected right away. If a woman is given an interview after submitting her CV without a photo, she will face certain negotiations on the basis of the headscarf:

I said to myself, OK I’m going to send my CVs without a photo, I’m going to try it that way and I’m not going to tell them anything over the phone before I step out for the interview. I know what I will face, I am aware that I will

witness humiliating practices. I got pretty good responses on the CVs I submitted. When I go to an interview, people listen to me, it's all very nice, but they all end up saying: "We wish you didn't have a headscarf, we liked your qualifications very much". At that point, obviously you're very upset, you're worn out, you keep thinking this is not how it's supposed to be, actually you see that a lot of people around you are going through the same stuff. But despite the humiliation, you also have faith that you need to be there. You want to tell yourself, "I, too, am a part of this sector and they need to accept this one way or the other". If I stop going to those interviews, and if that other person does the same thing, then they will wipe us out completely. There is discrimination. And it's not just a matter of headscarf, you know, you're a woman, you're being humiliated but you also want to work. I actually see the headscarf issue as an extension of the ever-existing discrimination against women (Lale, Focus Group 2, 3 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul).

The ever changing rules and regulations in the public sector cause headscarved women to swing back and forth between hope and fury. A participant who had multiple struggles with myriad rules over the past 13 years to be able to work as a teacher describes the situation as follows:

In 1997, university graduates could be hired as class teachers. I applied to that position. In the first year I was not admitted. I was hired in the second year. At that time I had sent a CV with my photo in it. We were called to start working, we indeed started and then problems began to emerge. They commissioned us to a school, we kept waiting, but we were not assigned a class to teach. After I was reinstated to my position (we went to court and then reinstatement came), we had trouble. I was terminated again. (Lale, Focus Group 2, 3 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

The professional placement test presents yet another obstacle awaiting women seeking a public sector job. Women who were not headscarved during their university years or who did not suffer a grievance because the ban was not being enforced during their time, try to work around the ban by submitting photos with wigs when they send documents to take the centrally administered exams upon graduation:

They wanted a photo without a headscarf even when registering to take the test. We got our university degrees without taking off our headscarves. But later that was a problem as far as the Public Sector Placement Test was concerned. I gave a photo with a wig. (Gönül, Focus Group, 8 May 2010, KONYA)

Even when the test-taker is wearing a wig, a disturbing attitude and behavior may not cease, especially for a person who had to deal with this problem during her university education. In addition to the anxiety caused by the test,

headscarved women remain concerned that they may at any time be removed from an environment in which they are unwanted.

We are taking a test. No problems until you're seated. Test anxiety shakes you more than enough. And then it's 5 minutes to the beginning of the test, somebody comes and asks, ma'am you won't take the test like that, will you? Women's employment is already a troubled area, it's even more troubled for headscarved women (Gülbahar, Focus Group, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

The issue of adding a photo can cause trouble both when a headscarved woman is still a university student and in the centrally administered placement tests she takes upon graduation. In previous periods, some headscarved students used old photos taken when they were not wearing a headscarf, and some others were able to use photos showing them with a wig, and they were submitting their applications as such. Upon the introduction of photo-taking during test registration, these strategies became inapplicable. Thus, a headscarved student is expected to take off her headscarf in front of everyone or put on a wig after unveiling where the registration takes place and in the presence of all others there. For a young woman who is already feeling uneasy due to the problems regarding the headscarf, this expectation is another source of pressure.

You need to take the Academic Staff and Postgraduate Education Entrance Test (*Akademik Personel ve Lisansüstü Eğitimi Giriş Sınavı, ALES*) to get pedagogical training. There are universities where you can get that training. At that time those universities were in Ankara. For a while I worked independently in some foundations. I was thinking about postgraduate education. I did some scientific studies while at the foundation to educate myself. Now that I couldn't take ALES, I couldn't apply for postgraduate studies. And you can't give your photo beforehand, they take your picture right there. It is also a psychological thing. (Rojin, Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

A woman working as a teacher for the Ministry of National Education recounts how offensive a practice it is to request photos without headscarves:

I work at the Ministry of National Education, so I can't tell this everywhere. There are these semester meetings, and I can't get together with my colleagues and discuss with them the student profiles they encounter. I am not allowed to work at an Anatolian high-school [special public high schools where the instruction is in English and designed for academically superior students who are admitted by a national entrance exam only]. So I am not allowed to take the test, unlike my male colleagues or female colleagues who are not headscarved. Each year they want a photo for personnel records purposes. Why can't I submit a photo representing who I am, my personality?

It's actually alright for them as long as I am not headscarved in the photo.
(Hande, Focus Group 2, 3 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

Most of the women we talked to said they did not even receive their diplomas, but they still kept striving to survive in professional life despite all the deterrent policies:

My diploma has been in there for 10 years, I can't get it. I am normally not an ambitious person, but once they impose something on you, you say you've got to be there (Şükran, Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

3.3.2. EXPERIENCES OF INDIVIDUALS WHO MANAGED TO GET A JOB...

Women who managed to step into professional life in spite of the difficulties encountered during job search first shared their ideas about what they expected to see: professional regard and a perception as working women. In offering their experiences in various focus group discussions, headscarved women told how uneasy they were with their being perceived as “house-girl”³ in their business environment, at the expense of being seen as an individual in one's own right. They noted that while the “house-girl” perception of especially the conservative circles embodied a sincerely protective spirit, it also entailed a notion that they were not being taken seriously as equals to men. They added they were not accorded the esteem their professional status was to bring:

There are two main things: The class you're a part of sees you as a girl of her home. So, when they run into something unexpected from you, they're very surprised. “How come she could act like that!” is what they say. And somehow they are able to make themselves heard, but they nevertheless ask “is she up to the job?”... When a tradesman who grew up into traditional Islam encounters you, an entrepreneur, he looks at you from within those traditional values. Not from the viewpoint of the verses in the Qur'an. So, you face those obstacles when you're in a cohort subscribing to conservative and nationalist values (Ayşe, Focus Group, Women Entrepreneurs, 9 April 2010, MÜSİAD, Istanbul)

The women are also uncomfortable when men of lower status feel a sense of equality and rapport with them, and addressing them as “sister” or avoid the formal style of address and use their first names instead. The women interpret this as lack of regard for their professional status:

İnci: I'd be very uncomfortable if the guy who serves the tea calls me “sister”. I don't want to tolerate the sister-brother talk. I experienced this when I was at the foundation.

3 In traditional families when the young girls only entertain themselves with the housework and expect for their suitors for marriage, they are called (*evkızı*) housegirl.

Hande: Listening to what people told, I am thinking this: when they see you, a headscarved woman, they identify you with their moms or grandmoms. You can't quite be the "Engineer Mrs. So and So". You're the "sister", period.

Lale: Some places where there is a certain type of religious sensitivity do not really allow that. I am headscarved and I am a professional. I guess this has to do with the internal problems of our respective workplaces. (Focus Group 2, 3 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

Given the challenges they faced at universities to become professionals in their chosen field, professional headscarved women wish to be seen as "engineers" in their own right and treated accordingly:

Şükran: Because you're headscarved, you're the "sister"

Rojin: They learned our names, now they call us by our first names.

D.C.: They don't want to see your professional identity.

Ayşe: I actually feel that quite often. Not that it's a big deal, as you get to know them, you do something about it. For the brothers who serve the tea and do the clean-up, you're just one of them. Like you see that in the beginning right away. And you can't just tell them, don't act like that. Our superiors sometimes treat us as if we're girls of our homes. They say, you're one of us, and you would understand the situation. Sometimes they have a protectionist attitude, too, but you know, you don't want that. (Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

While being the "girl of her home" could function as a protective shield for a working woman who has a lower-status job with a lower income, a woman who holds a higher social standing in terms of her professional status and income would, understandably, object to that kind of perception. In previous research we conducted among headscarved women who work as sales associates, we saw that when the women use such family vocatives as "brother", "uncle", they assume the position of a "girl of her home", which may function as a strategy that prevents them from being harassed (Cindoğlu and Çırakman-Deveci, 2009). Such a position, however, is seen as discomfoting by the women participating in this study. Hints as to this variation might be found in modernization as an ideal. When women acquire high status and income with their own efforts, they wish to be respected because of the individual status they achieved through education, and not as a consequence of protective mechanisms originating from the family. Participants in this study may be finding the position of "girl of her home" discomfoting because it causes them to be perceived rather in a framework of traditional family roles, rather than in a position where the woman, proceeding within the social system through education, aspires to become a relatively independent and autonomous professional.

In general, employment is not just a means to earning an income for women who are university graduates and professionals. Being a professional also means that one has acquired a certain status in society. In the case of headscarved women in particular, employment is seen as a significant path to being respected by the society and acquiring status, especially given these women's idea that they are being perceived as second-class persons due to the headscarf. Merve, a study participant who holds a degree in management, responded as follows when asked "How would your life have been different if you had been working?":

I am not talking about money here. My husband has a good job. I would have been working for the past twenty years. I would have flattered my dad, as I was his only daughter he sent to school as an idealist man. I would have moved all the way up to the position of a manager at a bank or financial organization. Or if I were a public accountant, I would have become a certified one. But not for the purpose of making economic contributions. I would have been me. Not someone excluded, treated with contempt. I would have promoted to first class from second class in the eyes of the society. (Merve, Focus Group 1, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

I would have been me. Not someone excluded, treated with contempt. I would have promoted to first class from second class in the eyes of the society.

3.4. WAGE POLICIES

In Turkey, a headscarved woman can work only in a limited number of places. Because it will be extremely difficult to have a government job and then keep working there without taking the headscarf off, these women have no option but to work in the private sector. Nevertheless, in some particular sections of the public sector, for instance in the Directorate of Religious Affairs, there is some limited acceptance of employment without unveiling. Headscarved women cannot work in all segments of the private sector, either. However, they are more likely to find employment in small- and medium-sized enterprises owned by religious-conservative employers. But in those places, too, women are deterred from the job markets as a result of wage policies that work against women. A participant who related her experience as an employee at a lab owned by a religious and conservative employer summed up the situation as follows:

... well, the gentlemen told exactly this to me: your CV is OK, but it's a great risk to employ a woman, like they get married and then leave the job, but we see this as a matter of social responsibility, our headscarved sisters and stuff

like that. I told them what I could contribute to the place, see, two years ago I started a job at TL 1,000 per month, now they offered me the same salary. That is, they say “OK” to you, but with a low wage. The way they look at it is this, you actually need us, like while they are employing qualified staff, they do so at a very very low cost, it’s cheap labor for them. They think they will save like that. But if it was a male who had that position, I’d be ashamed to even offer that kind of money. I don’t think they would have talked to a male like that. And then they said, you know, we don’t know how much your husband makes, but women with university degrees take TL 500-600, so I should be comfortable with what they offer, since there were people who were working for lower wages. (Nadide, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

First among the factors deterring headscarved women from job markets are bosses who express, in different ways, how their presence disturbs them:

Two months after I began working like this, wearing a wig, the physician mentoring me came up to me and said “you don’t look hygienic at all”. I told him “this is not how I wanted to work, you imposed this on me, I asked you if I could work like this and you said alright”. After that they wanted me to wear a cap. Like an under cap. When you think I work from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m, I really had a terrible headache when I went back home. And there we were being paid meager sums, because this thing called the green capital was held by a certain group of people, so they owned this lab which was part of the hospital I was working at, and they were telling people, just like you said, “there are people out there with the same qualifications as you, who would work for lower salaries, if you don’t want to work, you’re welcome to leave, ten others are ready to take the job”. As this went on and on like that, I decided to leave that place... I started off at the ... foundation. I organized a few events, yet I was the only one doing all the work for an event, yet not standing out by any means. We organized this congress, even if you’re the one organizing the event, it’s better if you’re not there, for this will be there and that will be there, the media will be there, you’re a headscarved woman, they’ll see you, and they could take your presence to mean different things. Actually we were not doing anything unusual there, we were just doing what anyone else would be doing, but you see what happened in your case – just don’t be visible. And I was saying to myself, as long as the event I organized goes well, it’s alright if I am not around, it’s not a problem for me (Feyza, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, ANKARA)

Headscarved women are aware that they’re seen as cheap labor. The discriminatory practices they encountered while they had private-sector jobs complicated headscarved women’s relations with the job markets:

Sometimes you’re working without your social security being paid. When you raise this issue, it makes no difference. There’s already an economic crisis in

Turkey. Women are of secondary importance. And then you tell yourself, let me just stay home as a headscarved woman, at least my mind and my body won't get tired. (Hülya, Focus Group, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

3.5. WORKPLACE HARASSMENT AND “KEEPING ONESELF”:

“I PREFER TO WORK IN PLACES WHERE I COULD KEEP MYSELF FROM BEING HARASSED”

Because the public generally thinks that communities of practicing and conservative Muslims do not have a favorable opinion of women working, this study questioned the dimensions of this internalized traditional understanding. Religious women noted that they may have concerns in professional life arising from their religious perspective, and some women might be more concerned than others. Basically, women wanted to work in places where they could “keep themselves” as that's what their religiousness required of them:

You're a headscarved woman in professional life, for instance, it might be a minor detail, but this issue of the handshake. Things like that, about which you might have Islamic sensitivities or you might just have second thoughts about, for instance it might be a place where people consume alcohol, like it could be something you don't want to be a part of, instead of being at a place where I would be required to attend meetings where people drink, I better not be a part of that place. (Duygu, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

However, women who were bankers and had positions coming with much higher status and pay, the handshake was something they didn't like much, but they didn't make a big deal of it, either. The female bankers we interviewed as part of the research instead said they felt they were being discriminated against when sometimes they were not invited to business dinners because of their religiousness. They knew that attendance in gatherings like that was very important for moving up the ranks.

When the “protective” function of the headscarf was mentioned, it was noted that the headscarf generated esteem by providing an image of a “virtuous woman”:

For me it's no different... Wearing a headscarf might have advantages. That way, you're seen as the virtuous woman, the good woman, the well-mannered one. [...] you might be more advantageous than a woman without a headscarf. What I witnessed in my professional life is that, while some modern segments of society are critical of the headscarf, the traditional groups guard that safely. (Şahnur, Focus Group 2, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

Female bankers we interviewed in Istanbul gave us yet another example of how “guarded lifestyle practices” can come to serve a “protective” function

against the discriminatory and sexist viewpoint prevailing in the professional world. Protection against possible sexual harassment, which they approach as a matter of “security”, can be thought of as a mechanism given voice within a religious framework as regards the issue of safeguarding oneself against sexual harassment in the workplace, a very poignant and serious problem for women.

There is nothing in our religion which goes against working. The circumstances must be appropriate for women, as well. Let me talk on my behalf. Both women and men visit our branch. As a woman, I don't want to be an attendant. You are there until very early in the morning... It's about being a woman. For security purposes. I don't think it goes well with my character. (Gülben, Group Interview, Interest-free Bankers, 7 April 2010, Bank Facility, ISTANBUL)

In another focus group discussion, the group of men raised the issue of safeguarding against possible instances of harassment when asked about the kind of job they thought would be appropriate for their spouses:

I think an appropriate job is one where she could be happy, productive and stress-free. One where she would not be harassed or disturbed by other employees because she is headscarved. Whether a woman wears a mini skirt or veils herself, places where women are not harassed are appropriate places. (Alper, 28 March 2010, Focus Group, ANKARA)

The women further said the headscarf was protecting them from sex talk and slang, both signs of sexual harassment in verbal form. This needs to be interpreted as an expression of how unprotected women felt in professional life.

Lale: You know, if there's any slang, they avoid that in conversations. No sex jokes. In that sense, it's helpful.

Şükran: I heard that in my workplace they had a lot of profanity in their talk. After I came, there was less of that kind of talk. That I was a headscarved woman increased the level of decency there.

Asiye: You know it was quite interesting indeed. At the time I decided to wear a headscarf, I had very long hair. The moment I was out on the street, all those eyes turning to me would make it difficult for me to just walk. Then in one day, all the verbal abuse stopped. I was really quite pleased with that. Now there's this different kind of fashion, some people wear jeans with their headscarves. People criticize that, and women who dress like that are the subject of rude remarks.

Rojin: All our colleagues are sensitive. It's kind of like an American-style office. No problem at the workplace. Here for the first time I was not harassed in the bus.

Şaziye: No doubt that it keeps the eyes away from you. With your headscarf you're actually saying "I have a certain identity" and you're displaying that in a highlighted way (Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

In this chapter, we considered the attitudes professional headscarved women adopted vis-à-vis discriminatory practices, due both to the fact that they were women and they were headscarved, they encountered while looking for a job and while working, and the mechanisms they relied on to position themselves in job markets in more stable and safer ways. We discussed both what their own circles and families thought of their employment or unemployment, and pursued what they themselves made of the idea of work.

CHAPTER 4

Expectations, Prejudices and Barriers: Professional Headscarved Women as Family Members

While the traditional patriarchal approach implies a lifestyle in which a headscarved woman belongs in the home, this study, along with earlier ones, has shown that the religious lifestyle signaled by the headscarf does not entail a monolithic notion of women's presence in the world of labor. Some of the men and unemployed professional women we interviewed were following a more patriarchal model composed of traditional family roles than others. With their various religious interpretations, they shared with us the traditional perspective which defines a woman's traditional role in the family. Some other women we talked with, however, approached the issue of professional women's presence in the public sphere with a perspective fairly distanced from the traditional notion and more egalitarian within the family, although they also stayed within a religious framework in their approach. It should be emphasized at this point that not all headscarved women subscribe to the traditional approach when it comes to roles within the family. As Bayramoğlu (2006) demonstrated, headscarved women are developing their own individual approaches and are being highly active with respect to the modification of interfamily roles by relying on religious references. In addition, it is not quite possible to predict what expectations and imaginations headscarved women and their spouses would have had if there had not been a ban on the headscarf. Social reality is home to a "headscarf ban", and social actors adjust their behaviors and expectations in view of that obstacle, whether or not they fancy it.

In this chapter, individual attitudes and notions developed by headscarved women will be discussed in the context of the women's relations with their families, spouses and children.

4.1. DAUGHTERS' HEADSCARVES: RESPONSES FROM THEIR FAMILIES

4.1.1. "MY FAMILY DID NOT QUITE GET IT"

Nearly all of the women we interviewed declared that the decision to wear the headscarf, including when to wear it, was made on their own. While the public widely believes that they wear headscarves as a result of pressure from a father

or a husband, the interviews revealed quite the contrary: Our interviewees said they made the decision to veil on their own, in particular its timing was chosen at their discretion, and the reaction they got from their families could at best be characterized as “surprise”. One participant, for example, recounted that upon hearing her decision to veil, her father was taken aback, and he questioned why she wouldn’t unveil herself upon noticing the troubles she had finding a job:

My dad didn’t quite understand me... Much as he condoned all else we did in life, he didn’t oppose after I wore the headscarf. But when it came to finding a job, it was a different matter, like, his idea was that there wouldn’t be much hope in the private sector – he retired from a government job at the Ministry of Industry – in any case, forget about the private sector, a government job is like this, it’s like that, private sector people have their own guys, so he kept hoping I’d have a public sector position. I really couldn’t get him to understand what I was up to. He kept waiting that I’d take off the headscarf, but you know, I was trying to keep things in balance, and also after I wore the headscarf, my mom also wore it, so did my twin sister, but then we, like, my older sister –obviously everybody is entitled to their opinion, but I don’t think my older sister could understand the way I was thinking. And she also doesn’t understand why I have a problem with wearing a wig or taking off my headscarf I chose to put it on in the first place (Sümeyye, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

4.1.2. “ACTUALLY, THE WHOLE FAMILY EXPECTS THAT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A JOB”

Women’s getting education is an important decision that concerns both the woman in question and her family. In particular, sending a daughter to school is, for the families involved, an important emotional and financial investment. Without regard to the level of traditionality and religiousness, families choosing to send their daughters to school beyond compulsory education are moving away from conservative patterns on the one hand, and are stepping into a world that is connected to modernity, and they nurture hopes in that regard. Educating daughters points to a possibility of higher status and income not only for the daughter herself but also for the family involved. Therefore, when their daughters risk being discharged from school because of the headscarf, families are hugely disappointed and react against their daughters very harshly:

Melis: My dad performs his prayers. Yet, he stormed in furiously and attempted to rip off my headscarf. He was a farmer and worked in Germany for several years. They were always adamant that I work, so when they realized that I was not able to hold a job due to my headscarf, they were very upset. But over time they got used to it.

[...]

Hafize: When you're among folks, the talk eventually comes to a point where somebody says "nowadays it's not easy to pass the university exams, so if you've already got in, why don't you just take off your headscarf and go to school. (Focus Group 3, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

4.1.3. "THEY NEVER WANTED ME TO PUT ON THE HEADSCARF"

In fact, headscarved women generally have family members who are also headscarved. But families expect their daughters to wear the headscarf at a later stage, for instance after they get married. A young woman is traditionally expected to put on a headscarf after her husband asks and insists that she do so upon marriage. When young women decide to wear headscarves prior to marriage and on their own, knowing they will pay a heavy price for their decisions, some families find themselves in a desperate situation. They then push their daughters toward giving up the decision to wear headscarves:

Sevim: On the first day I wore the headscarf, my dad was strictly opposed to it, they were very upset that I could be discharged from my job – they probably thought I would be fired right away, but I held on to my job for the next three years, so they never wanted me to put on the headscarf, and made a great effort so I would give up, even now they still keep asking, is this why you went to school, what's all this for, and stuff like that...

Kezban: My dad tells me, like, you went to school, became an engineer, you're now a well-educated person, very well-educated... They're supportive, but my mom still says – my girl, you worked hard to go to school, you studied real hard – and indeed it was hard for us, I went to school for five years, so my mom still says, I wish you could work and reap the fruits of your efforts. (Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

Although the families of most interviewees somehow expected their daughters to wear a headscarf, there were families who opposed it strictly from the beginning. A young woman who was blamed by her father for "dressing like the Arabs" says "I first struggled with my own family" and adds she was able to escape the pressure thanks to her husband's support. When her father asked her why she didn't take off her headscarf and work as a teacher, she eventually said "my husband does not allow that", and that was the end of the discussion:

My family was against me veiling. I put it on before I was successful at the university placement exam. Had I not worn the headscarf, I would have chosen to enroll in the English Language Education Department. After I wore the headscarf, I selected the Arabic Language Education Department. I had the third place among all the students who chose that department. The first thing my dad told me after that was: "So dressing like the Arabs is not enough, and now you're going to talk like them?" So, I went through all that, but I held my

ground. My initial struggle was with my family. Finally they yielded. My husband – I married someone who had the same ideas as me, and my father-in-law is an imam - that was a different process there. See, an imam comes and asks me in marriage to his son, we went through a lot of trouble. Later, after I started working as a teacher and then was laid off, he heard all about that and said: “Did I send you to school for no reason?”. And my husband said “no” and “whatever you want, whatever decision you make, I’m with you”. Then you become emotionally overcharged. And you feel like you want to pay back to him, what he spent for five years of my education. After seeing that there was just no way out like that, my husband said “I don’t want her to work”, otherwise my relations with my family would have gone sour. So, my husband saved me. They said “the son-in-law does not want her to work” and that was the end of the discussion. (Selma, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

Fathers tried to persuade their daughters to take the headscarf off by using traditional discourse. They attempted to bring to their daughters’ attention the example of those women who chose to unveil in the process:

At first, there were people who gave up pretty quickly and just took their headscarf off, after what those people did. For instance, many professors did not allow us to take our tests by saying “see, everybody took their headscarves off, you’re the only one remaining, I don’t have time to deal with you”. Or when my dad was using examples when talking to me, he said “even the mufti’s daughter took it off, why wouldn’t you?” We’ve seen all that quite often, actually. (Ferzan, Focus Group, 8 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

4.1.4. “MY FAMILY WAS SUPPORTIVE, BUT THEY INDEED WOULD LIKE ME TO WORK AND REAP THE BENEFITS OF MY EFFORTS”

Even the most religious families that are most supportive of their daughters wearing headscarves found it impossible to stomach the fact that their children would be deprived of a professional life, and tried to compel them to taking the headscarf off:

Duygu: My parents attended the vocational religious high school, and they sent me to the same school for my secondary education. In one way, they supported me as a headscarved person. Then I started university, and they didn’t want me to be charged with disciplinary actions, but if that’s what was needed to be endured, well they left the decision to me, and then I transferred to the theology department. Now I’m a graduate and I want to work, of course, and I am looking for a place where I could do that. My family is now in a position where they would support me even if I had to take the headscarf off to be able to work at a government job after taking the required test.

Sevim: Well the reason families support us is that, you know, when we were spending all those efforts, they were with me, first of all they supported me

financially and morally [...], and that's no small thing, and all they want is, they worked hard, we worked hard, let us reap the benefits of all the effort, we gained all that knowledge, let us be able to convey that, give it to someone else, be productive, that's how one can be happy, that's how it is indeed, I guess... (Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

Similarly, a woman pharmacist we interviewed said instead of removing her headscarf, she returned to her hometown Malatya from Ankara, where she was sent to study as the family's eldest daughter, when she needed to take her headscarf off at the school, and she was met with reaction by her family. Although her mother and relatives were headscarved like her, she said, her father put pressure on her so that she wouldn't quit school and return to Ankara:

I came to the school thinking that "I would study as a headscarved person". I am from the East, a native of Malatya. At that time, sending a daughter to school was not really considered a reasonable thing to do. And people around us said things like "why does she go to school?". And my father responded "if she wants to go to school, then let her". After succeeding in the university exams and entering university- in my third year of college - the headscarf issue arose. I was not allowed on campus, I quit school and returned home. The same people who used to say "why would she go to school?" now began asking "is she out of her mind, why did she quit school, why did she return?". Even my otherwise liberally-minded father was influenced by all that, and started pressuring me, "my girl, just go back", it was as if he was saying "nothing can be done, this is the way the system works". They supported me. (Leyla, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

4.1.5. "WITHOUT A JOB, WE ARE NOT TAKEN THAT SERIOUSLY IN THE FAMILY, EITHER"

As discussed in the previous chapter, the women told that they were not taken that seriously in their own families by their parents or by other women when they did not have a job in their own profession outside home. When a headscarved daughter cannot attend the university even if she was successful in the placement test, or when she cannot work upon graduation because of the headscarf ban, there arises a very serious issue for both the family and the woman in question. Having a professional job will earn status and income not just for that woman but for her family as well. Therefore, families might react when they are deprived of the opportunity. We showed through previous research that professional life equips the woman not only with money but also status, and that this status has an impact on the woman's status within her family (Cindoğlu and Muradoğlu, 1996). I reached the same finding in this study.

Elfida: It makes a difference in the family as well. It was not infrequently that we heard someone say “Just what is the difference between you, the educated, and us, the uneducated?”.

Melis: Because you don’t work, you face condescending attitudes.

Elfida: Even in your spouse’s eye you would have a different place. This might vary from one person to another, but even though our spouses like us the way we are and support us at all times, I think it would still make a difference. There’s that different perspective, that difference between the woman who has a job and one who stays home and takes care of her children.

Elif: I think we would be more self-confident if we were working women. For example, right now I really can’t teach some things to my children, in science for instance. The kids are fed up with that, they say “how come you know this, why?” to us, ‘we wish you didn’t know that’. Their friends tell them ‘hey your mom knows all that, and she’s at home, that’s very cool”. In order for anyone to feel happy...

Fehime: From time to time my husband and I talked about this. I am concerned that I can’t use my abilities and my potential. Because I had kids one right after another, there were times I spent my entire time at home, but even then I was trying to help my neighbors, I was helping their children with their studies. ‘I wish that talk on food recipes made me happy, but it just doesn’t. It’s not enough for me’. When my son was a first grader, I used to go quite often to his friends’ homes to help them with their courses. One of his friends had a mom with a very low level of education. The other had a stepmom. My husband told me “honey, if you had spent all this time working since that time, you would have reached a high position, but you gave up all that just for the sake of Allah, you need to know that you will have a much better place than me in Heaven. Because you gave up a whole lot more than I did. So, we keep living by thinking of the status in Heaven. (Focus Group 1, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

When women with a university degree cannot participate in the public sphere, their private relations suffer also. As shown in the discussion above, they think they would have had higher self-confidence had they been working women, and they would have more self-esteem if they were able to help others. In addition, as the excerpt below demonstrates, they may say they have a higher place in the eyes of their spouses when they participate in professional life.

When I don’t have a job, I don’t get as much respect from my spouse. (Dürdane, Focus Group, 7 May 2010, *Mevlevi Sofrası* Restaurant, KONYA)

As this clearly shows, the headscarf ban, the main reason for all the debate, has an impact on all aspects of the lives of headscarved women.

Women with a university degree noted that when they gave up professional life because of the headscarf ban, they were taken lightly within the family, and they were even made fun of, since there was no way of understanding why a professional woman would not work:

I worked as an accountant for many years. I spent quite a long time in public sector accounting [I was discharged because of my headscarf], but I can [no longer] put my education and work experience into any use [law-school graduate]. My dad makes fun of me, he says I am now only able to represent my kids as my clients. People are even joking about you not being able to work. When I was working at the Ministry, I could have used other opportunities easily. I wore the headscarf as I believed in what I am doing, and I didn't want to give that up. (Sevim, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

4.2. MOTHERHOOD

Of the gender roles, motherhood is the one that gains the most recognition in traditional as well as modern societies, and the one women internalize, socially imagine and reproduce in political contexts the most often. In addition, when considered subjectively, motherhood is a gender role that brings social status to women in all societies, and therefore, a role women ascribe great importance to and internalize as such. Our interviewees, too, paid highest attention to motherhood among their other social roles and underlined motherhood with religious and secular references. Most of the women we talked to considered it normal to leave work for a while and stay home after they had kids, only to return to their professions not too long after the kids started going to school.

Both women who never worked and those who quit working for a few years after they had kids and spent time away from their paid labor said they spent at least a few days a week working in line with their personal areas of political and social interest or actively involving themselves in NGOs.

4.2.1. DREAMS: WHAT ARE THEIR DREAMS FOR THEIR DAUGHTERS?

When we asked the interviewees about the kind of future they envisioned for their daughters after all the trouble they themselves went through, the responses we got suggested that the headscarf had a central place in the identities of professional headscarved women:

I think I would more actively support her by taking some of that burden off her shoulders, the burden she would assume because of her relationship with this system, this state; when I became a university student, my mom was indeed supportive, but my dad was thinking I would take off the headscarf because there was the headscarf issue at universities. Even though I said I wouldn't

take it off, that's still how he thought. So I went against him. Now, we are on good terms, but it's really very difficult to not have that support behind you. So when my child has those doubts I will support her, and I do want her to study and have a job. (Melike, Focus Group, 8 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

Another participant who grew up in a religious family said she emphasized with her father, who declined to support her during the whole process, only after she had her own child:

Ferzan: Actually I never wanted to have a daughter, because I suffered so much from the headscarf issue, I am fed up with it, and I never had my family beside me. That was quite tiring. My dad and I were like friends. So I felt extremely offended when he turned his back to me. I didn't have contact with my family for several years because of the headscarf issue. We came to the point of stopping all conversation, I even took a beating. There were many days I didn't go home, I had financial support from them during my university years, I stood on my own feet, promising myself not to "intrude into my beliefs, my headscarf"... I could not make any sense of it all. My dad was the one person who really wanted me to put on the headscarf, he was the most supportive. He has performed his daily prayers ever since elementary school, I was asking him "how come you could tell me to take my headscarf off?" I didn't understand. Now I am getting it just a little bit [laughs], now that I have my own child. We have a very good relationship now with my father, things got better afterwards. I would never leave my daughter alone in this matter. What scares me most is if she says "I am going to take off my headscarf and go to school as such". The thought of being tested on that scares me. I hope nothing like that happens.

D.C.: If it does, would you leave her alone?

Ferzan: I am scared of that happening, I am quite undecided there. Of course, I wouldn't leave her alone, but I would not want things to come to that point. Many close friends of mine have spent all that they had, just so their daughters could study with their headscarves. They are not really well-off, but they are spending hefty sums just so their children can study abroad. I would do all that I could to make sure she could go to school. (Focus Group, 8 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

While headscarved women are presented as exemplary figures to the younger generations, their families also tell them off now that they could not acquire what was rightfully theirs due to the headscarf issue:

D.C.: So, you're actually role models for the younger girls. Are there younger girls in your family who went to school?

Ferzan: They present me as an example, in fact.

D.C.: Like, "See your elder sister went to school, she has a trade of her own now".

Melike: But mostly they talk in the sense of “if it weren’t for the headscarf issue, she would have acquired a whole lot more”. They see it as if “she wasted her time”. (Focus Group, 8 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

The power of the pressure from the family sometimes pushes the young women against their will, postponing their decision to put on the headscarf:

Müjde: That’s right, I was not headscarved while at the university, high school or before that. I am so since 2006. I actually stated that specifically in the e-mail. At a young age, I wanted to put it on despite my family, but they didn’t accept on grounds of career, education. I said OK.

D.C.: Does your mom wear a headscarf?

Müjde: She is headscarved; but they had no expectation that I would attend the university, have a career and work; they didn’t have that kind of wish. You know, some families want that. I see it with the people around me. (One-on-one Interview, 9 April 2010, Istanbul)

In interviews, some mothers expressed that they wholeheartedly wanted their daughters to work. Women expressing their views on this issue said their mothers wanted them to postpone putting on the headscarf, to not prejudice their educational and professional lives.

D.C.: Did your mothers work?

Halime: No.

Sema: No.

D.C.: But they still encouraged you to work?

Sema: Yes, because they felt the lack of that in their own lives, a working person has a different outlook on life, is more self-confident, the kind of joy she has is different due to her achievements. They see all that, and I think they have a logic which says “our kids completed their studies, now they need to do what is necessary”. (TV Network Interview, 6 April 2010, TV Building, Istanbul Office, Istanbul)

Şaziye: When I started my job, my parents discussed stuff like that. They would want me to wear the headscarf. But their understanding was that you could take it off to be able to work.

Rojin: My family also said the headscarf ban is a bad thing, but you should still go to school. My family is eventually a more traditional one. We’re not a homogenous family. Leftist political tendencies are more visible in our family. They said, you went to school all these years, now we want to see you studying at the university, why wouldn’t you put on a wig. They said at least that’s some kind of solution. (Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, Istanbul)

4.2.2. “MY PLANS FOR MY DAUGHTER’S FUTURE: SHE WILL GO TO SCHOOL, AND SHE WILL HAVE TO ENDURE IT, TOO”

In expressing the living conditions that she finds most attractive for herself, a woman might be challenged due to various social and individual hindrances. But the same person can voice those dreams through her child much more easily. The final question we asked in the interviews, focus group discussions and group interviews we conducted in this study was “knowing all the troubles you have had and observed because you wore the headscarf, what do you think of your own daughter wearing the headscarf herself in the future and going to school and having a job?” Responses to this question can be grouped under the following categories.

First, most of the participants in the groups said they would want their daughters to go to school if they were challenged due to the headscarf when they wanted to study. Giving up education was out of the question. But by the same token, they thought one could not do away with the headscarf, either:

My daughter is 17 and she is not headscarved. Until the time she goes to university, I am not encouraging her to put it on. I also don't think she should remain without a headscarf just to be able to have more success in her career or working life. If you can't work in this place, then maybe you could work at that other place. I would not want her to not wear the headscarf just to have a career. (Gülbahar, Group Interview, Interest-free Bankers, 7 April 2010, Bank Facility, Istanbul)

Second, women who try to remain hopeful that conditions will be more favorable at the time their daughters attend university told if the ban was still be in effect then, they would choose to send their daughters abroad for university education so long as they could afford it (the same view was expressed in the focus group discussions we held with men):

Şenay: The way I think about it is, all problems will be solved in the future, those who wear the headscarf and those who don't, Kurdish-Turkish, all these splits will be taken care of. But I would want my daughter to go through the trouble I had, to be really motivated by that and work more to adapt to life and society, I mean, I'd like her to become even more passionate about it so that she could work tirelessly to be an individual useful for the society and for our country.

Sevim: In my case– My daughter is a sixth grader, I guess I will soon face this issue personally as a mother, actually I face it even now, I don't think it is appropriate for a parent to give too much freedom to the kids – I will tell more on that – because there is a reason Allah wanted this child to be born to this family, and the reason is that they bring up and educate the child properly and show her the way, don't you think? Unlike animals – see once certain needs are

met animals just leave their young -, so it's different for us, human beings want to make sure their children can take full advantage of their parents' experiences and all that they accumulated, they want them to be equipped and carry certain qualities, don't you think? Just so they can lay the groundwork on which the children could build happy lives. Now, my daughter, I would want her to be knowledgeable in all senses of the word. That's why I would want her to get the best education. My husband and I think she could go abroad to study, maybe in Vienna or in the United States, actually my sister is a faculty member at an important university in the U.S., and she doesn't have any problems about that. I really don't want my daughter to face the challenges I did, why, I don't want her to have to experience that, to feel that pressure, to be looked down upon, to be hurt, I wouldn't want her to abandon her choice.

[...]

Hülya: When I say I don't want her to suffer, I would of course want to make sure she's aware of the problem, but I don't want her to face the humiliation. Otherwise, my daughter knows why her mom, as a school-of-law graduate, cannot work, and why she cannot study in Turkey. And she is aware that we will send her abroad to study if we have the means.

Nadide: I didn't directly experience the problems during university years, when I was studying abroad I was even given a room to perform my prayers, so I started thinking now what I would do if I had a daughter... I would want her to be able to study in Turkey –but why did we – I mean, that's how things are but, at that time... Not going to school is not the solution.

Duygu: I would absolutely make sure I send her to school, even if I don't have the means to send her abroad, I would still send her, whether with her headscarf or without, absolutely, if this thing's going to change, that's how it will be.

Hülya: Just like I would want to attend school with my headscarf, I would want the same thing for my child, the university placement exam for instance -it took me eight years to complete my undergraduate studies- then she might go abroad.

Hülya: It's not going to give you a job, but it contributes to your growth as a person. My daughter is five years old. I hope all the problems will be behind when she is eighteen. If she were eighteen, I would want her to go to school, but not without wearing her headscarf. I do hope that we have the financial means and we can send her abroad, I would absolutely not want to block her path. (Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

As it emerged in the group discussion above, headscarved women want their daughters to absolutely go to school, but they also want them to wear the headscarf. Women with younger daughters especially assume that the headscarf ban will have been lifted when the children are grown up, while those with daughters in secondary school and high-school were more realistic, when they said they “will exhaust all the possibilities to make sure to send their daughters abroad to study” and conveyed that they could help their daughters to bypass some of the existing problems with the headscarf in schools.

In addition, a participant who shared that her daughter was already feeling the pressure and worry, told that the child found the following solution:

Leyla: ... I have a daughter, too, she is a sixth grader. She knows what we've been through, and asks questions like "If I attend the university, what department should I choose? Will I be able to work? Will I be able to wear the headscarf?". This should actually never be the case, but our children are feeling all this.

Selma: As Zekiye told, they see us as role models. She then said something very interesting about the woman and the girl: I have found the solution, you can only be an author with the headscarf on, so I am going to be an author.

[...]

Ceydanur: In order for our daughter to become a Muslim woman who can defend her rights, my husband and I raised her accordingly. As her family, we told her "look honey you're now a mature person responsible for the consequences of your actions, we told you what we needed to tell you". My opinion is that she's going to do what is incumbent upon her as a Muslim. I'd like her to have the headscarf. She could find another way to be able to study. Right now, for instance, she is thinking: "Mom, they say in Vienna you can attend the university with your headscarf". She will try to find a way. The world is no Heaven, and we're seeking the path to Heaven. I'd like her to wear the headscarf and study as such. Or let her work hard in this life for that. That's the way we tried to raise her, and we didn't do so for no reason.

Filiz: My daughter began wearing the headscarf when she was in the sixth grade, right now she is in the eighth grade. She will go through the processes I did. I didn't take off my headscarf during my school years, and I wish upon her that she does the same thing. If necessary, she will go abroad to study. Because I know about the problems, I am sending her to a private school. So she will be able to continue like that. But I am also hopeful that when it is her turn, some things will change. At my time, there was a period like that, when the Welfare Party was in power. I sincerely wish that circumstances will be a bit relaxed by the time she attends the university, but we will do whatever we can, no matter what.

[...]

Zekiye: I have two daughters, neither is wearing a headscarf. They are having some doubts. Right now they think they will put on the headscarf after they complete university education, but in the meantime we also talk about this with them: There is more to religion than the headscarf. All individuals need to adopt good personality traits. Once you instill that in them, you will have it easy, that's what we tell them.

[...]

Selma: I hope my daughter reaches maturity at a later age, just like I did. My daughter is in fifth grade now. As my friends here, I too would like her to put

on the headscarf. I think it's way too soon now to tell her about these things. When the day comes, we will think and then decide, I guess.

[...]

Zekiye: They have their hesitations, of course. "Should I put it on or not? How pleased will Allah be with my decision?"; they ask. They have these doubts, but when they reach a certain age, they will come to a decision. (Focus Group, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

4.2.3. "I WOULD LIKE HER TO HAVE A JOB WHERE SHE COULD WORK AS A HEADSCARVED WOMAN"

When asked of their dreams and hopes about their daughters, all of the participants said they would want them to have an education and a trade of their own. But when reminded that the headscarf might still remain an obstacle, they said they would want their daughters to have a job where they could work with their headscarves on.

Pelin: I, too, would want her to study and have a job. She realizes that now, actually. She looks at the housewives around us, and then she looks at me... "I can't be a housewife, I am going to be a professional woman, just like you", that's what she says. I will bring her up so that she would wear the headscarf, but I won't compel her. I will offer her religious knowledge, but I won't impose that on her.

Zehra: Same here, I would want her to have it on, but I would also want her to be working. And I really hope things will be better in the future. That's my hope. Compared to the headscarved women before us, we're in a better position.

Hafize: I would like her to be able to study and work with her headscarf on. (Focus Group, 7 May 2010, *Mevlevi Sofrası* Restaurant, KONYA)

4.3. DUTIES OF THE MAN AND THE WOMAN IN A RELIGIOUS FAMILY

During interviews and focus groups conducted over the course of the field study, there was detailed discussion which included references to the sacred and suggested that in a religious family the man is tasked with leadership and household administration, but he is also charged with the responsibility to provide for the family.

4.3.1. "IT'S THE MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE FOR THE FAMILY"

When discussing the man's domestic responsibilities, the women we talked with said the major difference between the man and the woman in terms of working outside home is that it is the former's responsibility to provide for the family.

The person responsible for that in the family is the man, that's the way I know it, I don't have that kind of responsibility, like if the woman was tasked with that kind of duty then I would have a different view of the matter, for instance I would like to work but not out of responsibility, it is not my obligation, it's the duty of my husband. (Sevim, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUMDER, ANKARA)

We encountered over and over the view that providing for the family was an essential duty of men and their religious obligation:

When you look at it from a religious perspective, it is not the woman's responsibility to provide for the family. Actually in a marriage, a woman is not even required to care for or breastfeed the baby. Other than maintaining the marriage, she almost has no responsibilities arising from religion (Melike, Focus Group, 8 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul).

In extended detail, the women talked about the importance and additional weight of the responsibility imposed on the man. But they also underlined that this did not prohibit them from working:

As my friend said, the man is the one tasked to be the bread-winner [who will be responsible to provide for the family]". In an economic sense, the man has to take care of the home. But I too have an identity of my own, and if I am able to produce something at home, I would want to do that (Kevser, Focus Group, 8 April 2010, Istanbul)

As a matter of fact, they said men were not prevented at all from helping women with household chores, and gave examples from the life of Prophet Muhammad to illustrate that men can do domestic work and take care of the children:

Ferzan: What are the responsibilities of the man? He needs to provide for his family, and also helps with domestic chores. Takes care of the child, does domestic work; because that's what our Prophet did.

D.C.: Alright, how is this caretaker (*kavvam*) mechanism apparent in your life?

Ferzan: I am not supposed to provide for the family, he is the one who is required to do that.

D.C.: But you're working too...

Ferzan: I am working, too.

D.C.: In your case, how is the leadership role being played out?

Ferzan: It's not actually; we are making our decisions jointly.

D.C.: But doesn't the caretaker concept involve leadership?

Kevser: See, there's this more rational thinking of men. They consider things from a more rational perspective, that's the way they are created, that's their creation (*fitrat*). This doesn't mean women are irrational or unreasonable.

Ferzan: I don't agree with that. It's a traditional notion.

Kevser: Women look at things from a more emotional perspective. I agree that the concept of caretaker builds on that, in fact. Why? For instance, there could be an issue, a decision to be made about the home. When making that decision, the man approaches the issue from a more rational angle while the woman from a more emotional one. (Focus Group, 8 April 2010, TESEV, Istanbul)

They said the position of a trustee-caretaker (*kavvam*) has to do with administrative rights, and women need to have a role in that process. They also added they were not accountable to men with respect to their own earnings:

Ferzan: A trustee is someone who is in charge of an economic asset. You could owe or borrow, but that's not a decision you could make without the spouse's input. The wife's property is hers; the husband cannot interfere with that. That's how it is in Islam; he is supposed to spend his earnings in consultation with me, because I am entitled to a part of that.

Ferzan: I have the right to dispose of my property. But my husband does not have the same right to dispose of his property as he likes. He has to consult with me; because I am entitled to a part of it. So where does his role as trustee come in? That's his duty to provide for the family. Also, the woman is not allowed to bring in the home a person the man does not want to see there.

D.C.: I understand, so the role of trustee helps to negotiate social life.

Fatmagül: But there's also this: Unless you consult with your husband, you wouldn't be allowed to spend out of his property for anything other than household expenses. For instance, you can't give money to your mother without asking him first.

Melike: "You can't give money to third parties without asking your husband." Is there a religious injunction like that? There's no such thing. What you have there is a responsibility, only that. The man has to provide for that family in the economic sense. But the woman is not required to take care of the family, saying "I, too, have this religious obligation". That's the woman's right over the man. But does that economic responsibility entitle the man to domination? No, religion does not say that. But in a power relationship, just like in other kinds of relationships in society, would a man assume a stronger position because he provides for the family in an economic sense? Yes, he would. But is that a religious sanction? No, there's no such thing in religion. I mean, if the man is in a dominant position in a religious, Muslim family, that's not due to the religion itself. That's only a responsibility Allah put on his shoulders. He is the one Allah tasked with the duty to provide for the family, and he's supposed to be up to the task. So, that's all there's to it.

The same views were voiced in the group discussion in Konya.

There's also this thing in Islam – not that I agree with her opinion – in Islam it is the man who has the obligation to provide for the family. The woman does

not have the responsibility to spend for the home. She could spend her money for herself. The man cannot interfere with that. (Saliha, Focus Group, 7 May 2010, *Mevlevi Sofrası* Restaurant, KONYA)

When the discussion came to the traditional roles restricting women to the space of the home, they told Islam protects the women:

In Islam, the woman is protected and held in high regard. The man is obliged to provide for the woman. So that the woman is not hurt in any way because that's her creation (*fitrat*). The men are supposed to be their protectors. That's how it's supposed to be, alright you're protecting the woman against outsiders, but it's a different story when it comes to the inside of the home. The idea is not translating into practice there. (Saliha, Focus Group, 7 May 2010, *Mevlevi Sofrası* Restaurant, KONYA)

4.3.2. "WHY MY HUSBAND WOULD NOT WANT ME TO WORK... WELL, THAT WOULD SHAKE HIS AUTHORITY AT HOME, OF COURSE..."

Following the extended discussion on Islam not prohibiting women from participating in business life at all, there were expressions that men sometimes thought differently about it. At this point, however, the women said the traditional roles men come to expect of them did not have anything to do with their religiousness, and those expectations might be related to their patriarchal attitude. They said men do not want women to work so that they can hold on to their rule at home:

Sevim: In fact, I know from my friends that many men— many men in this segment of society – have this view: “when she works, she’s going to be tired when she returns from work, she normally cooks three dishes and that’ll drop to two, and she’ll say this or that to me when it comes to the kids and their homework”. I know many of them think like that, and I think that’s quite natural.

Duygu: I don’t think that’s natural...

Sevim: When I say natural, I mean he thinks his authority will diminish, you know, someone will come up against him and say “I am here, too, why don’t you also take care of that job”, and why would he want to do that, he’s not used to it, actually all of them have that kind of thinking in their subconscious, she needs to do all that...

Duygu: Well, let’s not say all of them.

Sevim: Come on, you’re talking about Turkish men, raised by Turkish moms who said “here my little prince, you can do anything”, now you have that kind of view in the subconscious... (Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

There's of course no doubt that men not wanting their spouses to undertake paid labor is not specific only to religious people in society. The important point here, however, is that traditional roles are being negotiated in the family from a religious perspective. The emphasis placed, with religious references, on justice in the family, and not on equality, swings the pendulum to women's disadvantage when it comes to relations between men and women.

In this chapter, we sought to understand the attitudes and experiences of professional headscarved women vis-à-vis expectations arising from gender roles. The focus was on how headscarved women interpreted gender roles within the framework of their religiousness, and it emerged that (1) they did not see themselves as tied by and restricted to the space of the home, (2) they were aware that they lost status not only in the public sphere but also in the private sphere because they did not work outside of the home, (3) they had serious concerns about the education and business life of their daughters unless the headscarf ban was lifted, and they were devising solutions to address those concerns.



CHAPTER 5

Labor Markets Meet the Headscarf: The Spillover Effect of the Headscarf Ban

As discussed in the previous chapters, professional headscarved women are suffering discrimination during various phases of professional life (recruitment, promotion, and lay-off) due to the headscarf. The discrimination results not only from employer practices but also from the way business life is structured. Although professional life is mainly divided into public and private sectors, people with professional jobs are in constant connection and communication with both sectors. Therefore, one could argue that the headscarf ban in the public sector impacts the private sector, and the ban in the private sector has a spillover effect.

This study has found that lack of access to public sector jobs is not the only obstacle headscarved women face over the course of the employment process; the “banned” status of these women plays a prohibitive function in private companies in terms of (1) recruitment, (2) wage policies, (3) work performance and (4) promotion.

As summed by the interviewee in her job search story in Turkey upon returning from Denmark where she earned a master’s degree, there appears to be three types of employers: First, employers who never hire headscarved employees; second, those who say “put your headscarf on outside the workplace, but not inside”; and third, employers who employ headscarved women, but offer them lower wages.

Considering the bigger picture of society, I was offended when I saw phrasing such as “not headscarved” in job postings. In my opinion, there are three groups, so I never bother applying to certain places. Some companies do hire, but only if you’re not headscarved. They either consider you a nobody, or they say no headscarf, we don’t want headscarved people. The second group consists of some private companies that say “OK” to you, but then add “you have to take it off when you’re inside”, “alright, have it on outside, but take it off when you’re in here”. The third group, that’s like the company where I went for an interview two weeks ago. Well, the gentlemen told exactly this to me: your CV is OK, but it’s a great risk to employ a woman, like they get married and then leave the job, but we see this as a matter of social

responsibility, our headscarved sisters and stuff like that. I told them what I could contribute to the place, see, two years ago I started a job at TL 1,000 per month, now they offered me the same salary. That is, they say “OK” to you, but with a low wage. The way they look at it is this, you actually need us, like while they are employing qualified staff, they do so at a very very low cost, it’s cheap labor for them. They think they will save like that. But if it was a male who had that position, I’d be ashamed to even offer that kind of money. I don’t think they would have talked to a male like that. And then they said, you know, we don’t know how much your husband makes, but women with university degrees take TL 500-600, so I should be comfortable with what they offer, since there were people who were working for lower wages. (Nadide, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

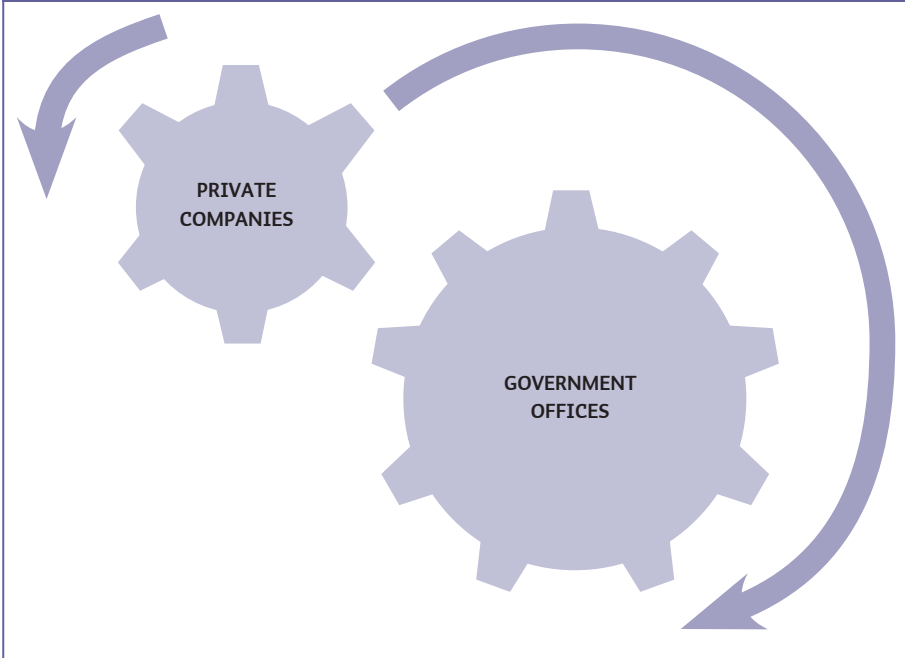
5.1. THE MECHANISM OF THE SPILLOVER EFFECT: RELATIONS PRIVATE COMPANIES HAVE WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICES

Public and private companies are not independent from each other. Especially given the structure of job markets in Turkey, more than 85% of employment is in small- and medium-sized enterprises, which requires professional women and men working at those businesses to maintain relations and cooperate with many different institutions and organizations over the course of a business day. The headscarf ban in effect at universities and public jobs impact several aspects of labor life.

In Turkey in the year 2010, working conditions in professional jobs are much different from those of blue-collar factory workers, or even those of pink-collar service industry workers. While a factory worker performs the job in a specific location within designated working hours, a sales associate, similarly, works in a certain section of a given store. Over the course of performing the job, the factory worker has to be in contact with only the other workers. And the sales associate performs the job only by remaining in contact with the boss and the customers.

White-collar professionals such as lawyers, physicians, dentists, engineers, communication specialists, journalists or bankers, however, have to stay in touch with various institutions and organizations, including government offices, because of the requirements of their work. While certain professions have greater room for independent and individual performance, others require employment in a corporate context. In addition, business markets, including those in which medical doctors work, are increasingly evolving towards a more corporate structure. This contributes to the restrictions referred to above.

Figure 2



In this regard, it is necessary to consider the obligatory relations of certain professions with other institutions and organizations, which arise from the nature of the profession in question.

5.1.1. EXAMPLES FROM VARIOUS PROFESSIONS

5.1.1.1. LAWYERS

When performing her job, a lawyer needs to stay in touch with (1) plaintiffs-clients, (2) judges, (3) judicial officers, (4) banks, (5) title deed registers, tax offices and other public offices, (6) the bar, which is a professional association. In addition, bar associations, courts, judges and prosecutors do not treat a headscarved intern or lawyer in the same manner. Arbitrary practices might create a gray zone.

Headscarved lawyers face obstacles when they register for membership in the bar association, or over the course of their professional relationship with the bar, if they are members already. A headscarved lawyer who is a member of the bar association in her city but does not have an independent practice tells how she had to work for very low wages at the offices of other lawyers upon not being

allowed access to courthouses. Not preferring to work like that, she chose to stop practicing law:

I worked for seven years. I haven't been working since 1999. I did my legal apprenticeship in the ... (province name) Bar Association. At that time, headscarved women were allowed to complete their compulsory legal apprenticeship. I didn't think of practicing at another law office. You're banned from courthouses by default. You could only practice your profession in the back office. And those who practice in the back office suffer seriously. They work for low wages. I did not want to be exploited by others (Sevim, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

The same processes were described by another lawyer who attended one of the group meetings in Istanbul. Her account added further that apprenticeship might create problems for a headscarved lawyer, and people even went so far as to living in another city to be able to obtain a license.

First we need to go through the hoops of the apprenticeship period without hazard. We need to obtain the license. I spent my entire life in Istanbul, but I got my license in ... (name of the city). I had no previous history in that place at all. I faced a heavy financial and moral burden. And then, we need to practice the craft during apprenticeship so we can learn the job. There's a difference between theory and practice. I was not able to find any paid jobs in any case. Even people who sympathized with our line of thinking exploited us. We were left alone. Here's how it was: For instance, I am not allowed to participate in a hearing. That's the 28 February era, anyway. They even have second thoughts about us entering the courthouse. No access in Ankara, same in İzmir... The ban was barely overlooked in Istanbul. Like, it'll be banned in a day or two, why would then the guy pay me a salary? Maybe if I were in their shoes, [I'd probably do the same] because they have a businessman's approach to the matter. So, whether we will be allowed to enter the courthouse is being debated. In bailiff's offices we were able to work in certain divisions. For instance, you need to get a referral from the judge to be able to file a complaint, or if you want to submit a document to the case file. When I go to get that, I pray a lot and say "My God, please don't let him ruin my apprenticeship". He actually has that power, a phone call is all he needs to do, if he calls the bar association and informs "there's a headscarved woman working here", they will then revoke the apprenticeship right away, ruin our lives, annul the license. They could ruin it all. They could do anything. (Fatmagül, Group Interview, 8 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL)

Lawyers who risk it all and start their own practices despite all the challenges said that the plaintiffs they represent accuse them of not staying on top of their cases and not taking them seriously, because they were not allowed to hearings.

I started my own practice at some point. The 28 February era was very troublesome for us. I completed the apprenticeship, had no work as a lawyer for a year. I even thought about entrepreneurship. Thinking that there's no living I can make out of this profession. And I have this energy in me. And then there's this idea "you erected those obstacles before me, but here I am doing something no matter what". And I wanted to set an example for people. I did a few things after that, but in terms of my profession I did nothing for one year. Then I started my own law office. Clients come to the office, tell their story, you try to help. And they ask: "Are you allowed to participate in hearings?". First I responded "Yes, I am, when I take off my headscarf", and then referred them to other colleagues. Once I got this case, a divorce. We stay on top of things, after all, the way we do the job will be our publicity, and we really do no wrong to anyone. See, the person who came to you is an aggrieved woman... And you're aggrieved yourself, too. You think of it that way, and you help. So she had a hearing, when witnesses were to be heard, a colleague of mine was to be present. I had a really hard time then. She asked me, "why aren't you going in?" I glossed over the reality in some way, and told her something that was not accurate. I felt very uncomfortable at that time. You know, think about it: You're a lawyer, you're in the courthouse, and the only obstacle before your presence in the hearing room is the headscarf you're wearing. I felt really hurt by that. Afterwards I had a private practice, but I didn't get clients. Sometimes people would come without knowing I was headscarved. So I went on like that for a while. Then I realized it won't move forward like that. I moved to a company, and started working there. Right now we're having a relaxed time. Something that comes with the government in power now. Once the government changes, we will have the same issues all over again. So we know that everything can change for us in Turkey in a split second. No chance to look forward with some confidence, that's the life we have. (Fatmagül, Group Interview, 8 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL)

Think about it: You're a lawyer, you're in the courthouse, and the only obstacle before your presence in the hearing room is the headscarf you're wearing. I felt really hurt by that.

While the headscarf ban is still in effect, headscarved women began having positions in some public organizations, especially companies owned by municipalities. Though that is reason for hope for headscarved women on the one hand, a fair work environment cannot be said to have come into being, on the other, since the ban continues. Lawyers who work in such places are given back office tasks that do not entail court presence, and they say this relegation is nothing to be pleased about.

5.1.1.2. PHARMACISTS

For long, being a self-employed pharmacist has been considered a woman's job in Turkey. This belief is grounded in the expectation that the woman can work in her own pharmacy, without reporting to anyone, managing the place as if she was managing her home, even able to go home when necessary and fulfill the responsibilities there, and over time transferring the workload to her assistants. This belief continues to apply to headscarved women. However, even in this type of profession, the pharmacist's relations over the course of the day with people, institutions, and professional organizations preclude her from carrying out the work with her headscarf on.

I had a contract with the military, with Gülhane (Military Medical Academy). So they told me "alright you sign the contract, but sometimes let's have the pharmacist bring over the drugs." So, some of them don't want to deal with your assistant. So you go there, they have their checks, they ask if you have pins on your headscarf, order you to tie it like this, and say you can't use that type of pin with the headscarf. So, they make you remove that. The military people don't want a "pin-free headscarf" [that is, a headscarf whose ends, when tied underneath the chin, form a bunny-ear shape]. Eventually I cancelled my contracts, I am not supplying them any longer. I left them three years ago, because I said enough is enough, everything is considered a problem. And now you have the patients. You're pharmacist-on-duty, they come to you. At sight of a minor fault by you, they say "I will complain about you" and stuff. So the military people really oppose this adamantly. Each time they see you, there's a reaction. (Filiz, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

The association is no panacea to your ailment. Every bit of their attitude tells you they don't want to admit you. You can't attend some of their events, for the atmosphere is such that there's a lot that goes on in there that totally contradicts your beliefs, so you can't take advantage of the benefits of membership. You pay the membership dues, you're a member, but no benefits to you.

In addition, headscarved women also complain about insufficient support from their professional organizations.

Zekiye: Our professional association has no power. In fact, they admitted us to membership only recently.

Filiz: The association is no panacea to your ailment. Every bit of their attitude tells you they don't want to admit you. You can't attend some of their events,

for the atmosphere is such that there's a lot that goes on in there that totally contradicts your beliefs, so you can't take advantage of the benefits of membership. You pay the membership dues, you're a member, but no benefits to you. (Focus Group 1, MAZLUMDER, ANKARA)

The women pharmacists recounted that they faced challenges arising from both being a woman and wearing the headscarf. When they compare their situation with that of the women pharmacists in other Muslim-majority countries, they see their peers there much more active in professional associations than themselves:

In Turkey, there's undue emphasis on the female identity. Also veiled women are overemphasizing their identities as women. In Malaysia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, there are many people who have conducted business successfully as women. We grew up in a culture which highlights one's gender, like "you're a woman" type of logic. So, we also somehow internalized that we're women first and foremost. In order to be able to put the emphasis on the work we do, we need to think outside the box a bit... When I meet my Iranian colleagues, I see them pretty comfortable with their male colleagues. Here we attempted to create our own network and participate in the election. It's like there were mountains between us [...] They set their sights on a certain target, they want to win the election, but just can't go beyond those limits. (Gaye, 9 April 2010, Women Entrepreneurs' Group, ISTANBUL)

5.1.1.3 TEACHERS

Considering the working hours, working conditions, and job security offered in public schools, teaching has traditionally come to be seen as a woman's profession. However, we observed that teacher candidates who are headscarved are involved in different negotiations and reactions while searching for a job and then when they are performing their jobs after they get a position.

We noticed that several of the women we talked with have been dreaming and longing for a teaching position at a school affiliated with the Ministry of National Education. Teaching as a profession is praised with both traditional and Islamic references and modern ones, and equal wages for male and female teachers at public schools, together with specific working hours and vacation times, make teaching a very attractive option for women. Though problems with promotions, an almost all-male ensemble of auditors, and the mostly male composition of the principal and vice-principal population were raised at time, the real complaint was about the difficulties in working conditions due to the headscarf ban. Conditions before the 28 February era were far different from those after it. Women who joined the profession before that era began working with their headscarves on, but afterwards they faced obstacles:

Elfida: When I was a teacher in Yozgat, my father was accompanying me. It's some village I don't know, so he was with me there. During weekends, he taught kids who were lagging behind in literacy. The kids in the village fell behind. The auditors, senior educators who came there did not bother to care about them. I worked with my headscarf on, but I had trouble. My papers were thrown at my face, I was insulted. So, they didn't pay attention to the good job we were doing, all that mattered was your headscarf, which they considered a thorny subject hurting them, and then you were facing all these insults. The good things you do, no one notices them.

[...]

Dilber: Headscarf is pretty much the reason I do not work. I put it on when I was a sophomore. I graduated with a good average, even though we did not attend many classes. In our time, there was a proficiency exam, that's how teachers were being hired. Also the generation that followed ours took that exam, and then it was abolished. So, I took the exam, which was the equivalent of today's KPSS. I completed school, my posting was done, but when I went to the place, I faced the headscarf issue, and then I returned. At that time I was also going through my engagement. In the meantime, the Social Services Institution held a test, which I took and won a spot, and I was posted again. To Adapazarı, though it was first Bolu, the Social Services division of the Ministry there. I went there, but again I came back without starting. With my marriage and all that in the meantime, I lost hope. After that, a colleague who was a principal at the vocational religious high school suggested I work at that school, on a contractual basis. I taught there for about three semesters, after that I was pregnant, later I wasn't able to find anyone to take care of the baby. I had to change babysitters often. So when I saw that the baby was becoming cranky, I left that position, too, the contractual one. (Focus Group 1, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

This study has shown that stories of dismissal from public-sector jobs are as varied as those of recruitment. Many women who were terminated from their public jobs because of the headscarf ban waged legal battles and then they were reinstated, but since the ban remained in effect, repetitive entries were created in their disciplinary records while they were striving to cling to their jobs:

I haven't told what I experienced in the public sector, nor how I was dismissed. I just wanted to tell this one thing. This bothered me really badly, as it did a friend of mine. It was shortly before the time of the dismissal. Teachers start their positions on 1 July, and a meeting is held on the day of the occasion. So, we were two headscarved teachers there, it was a hot summer day, and people dressed as they saw fit. There were people in miniskirts. When the principal saw us, he started reading the regulations on dress and attire: "The head shall always be uncovered". The principal said "two colleagues do not follow the regulations, and we will be recording their non-compliance in the book". To

this day, I don't know what grounds I was dismissed on. For dismissal reasons, they wrote stuff like I didn't fulfill my duties, I defied Atatürkist principles, I damaged school materials and supplies, I engaged in separatist activities. So they wrote all that in the record, and I have no idea. Because there's no such thing as being dismissed on grounds of cloth and attire, the farthest it goes is a "warning notice and reprobation". (Fatma, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

When the principal saw us, he started reading the regulations on dress and attire: "The head shall always be uncovered". The principal said "two colleagues do not follow the regulations, and we will be recording their non-compliance in the book". To this day, I don't know what grounds I was dismissed on. For dismissal reasons, they wrote stuff like I didn't fulfill my duties, I defied Atatürkist principles, I damaged school materials and supplies, I engaged in separatist activities.

Unable to teach at public schools, the only other option left to a woman who wishes to teach is presented by private establishments that prepare students for various exams, or private schools. Though some privately-funded educational institutions tolerate the headscarf, the wages and working conditions they offer, too, put the headscarved women at a disadvantage. While working hours in these establishments might be twice longer than those at public ones, wages drop all the way down to half.

Even though she's a teacher, my wife works at a private institution, and it's a conservative one. Though these institutions are supposed to have a very keen sense of justice, unfortunately they are not doing that. 28 hours of work, low pay, overtime [Saturday-Sunday]. (Alper, Focus Group, 28 March 2010, Dedeman Hotel, ANKARA)

5.1.1.4. JOURNALISTS AND TV EMPLOYEES

Journalism, just like law practice or teaching, is not a sedentary job. The job of a journalist or correspondent will require travel to sources of news. So, (1) public institutions, (2) political party offices, (3) the Parliament, (4) courts, (5) university campuses will be among the places a journalist would need to visit over the course of a day. The headscarf is an obstacle before having access to these places.

You would know ... (newspaper name). It is a newspaper of conservative circles. When we first started, there were actually a few other headscarved fellows, fresh graduates. They were later laid off for various reasons. I am not

saying it was because of the headscarf, but truth be told, the daily didn't find it suitable to have many headscarved employees there. They didn't see them as employees who could be commissioned with any task or posted to any job, because, you know, if they go to a government office, it's a problem, and then there's the police office or the courthouse etc. And in Ankara, you have all those government offices. To pursue a story, you need to go to those places, like, the Prime Ministry, the Grand National Assembly and so on. See, you can't be a correspondent by sitting in the office. So, when those fellows left the job for this or that reason, I remained there as the only headscarved woman. In the first couple of years -1997 when Mr. Ecevit was Prime Minister- there weren't too many problems. At that time there were these human rights conferences at the Prime Ministry. I would go to those meetings. There were two headscarved correspondents in Ankara then. There weren't many issues, we were actively corresponding. Even if we couldn't go to the Grand National Assembly, we were allowed to go to the NGOs. It's still a problem when it comes to university campuses, though. Like, if there's a panel discussion on campus, I am still not able to follow that -as a journalist, for the purpose of covering a story. I am not even attempting to go, because I know for sure that there's going to be an argument there. When I say "I'm a journalist" to the guy at the gate, that's not going to make a difference for him. Other than that, there's this thing we've been feeling over the years at this institution here, something that became more intense with the Justice and Development Party government, I'm talking about those efforts to put headscarved women at the backstage. It might be different from one institution to another, but at this institution [journalism], [the prevailing attitude is] "don't let these [headscarved women] be around, be visible too much, so that they don't cause trouble for anyone".

[...]

There were two headscarved correspondents in Ankara then. There weren't many issues, we were actively corresponding. Even if we couldn't go to the Grand National Assembly, we were allowed to go to the NGOs. It's still a problem when it comes to university campuses, though. Like, if there's a panel discussion on campus, I am still not able to follow that -as a journalist, for the purpose of covering a story. I am not even attempting to go, because I know for sure that there's going to be an argument there. When I say "I'm a journalist" to the guy at the gate, that's not going to make a difference for him.

In journalism, for example, we see a lot of irregularities in salaries, odd behaviors, faults, financial troubles. Whether you're male, female, headscarved or not, everyone suffers from these troubles in the same way. But aside from that, women who are not headscarved have more of a chance in terms of promotion or other professional opportunities. In this newspaper, for instance, there were female and male colleagues who said "I'm not going to bother myself with this journalism stuff" and transferred to another institution, to a ministry, press office etc. But if you're a headscarved woman, you're stuck where you are. You can't object. If you argue with anyone about that, you'll be fired. And what are you going to do if you're fired? You won't be able to find another job. The probability of a headscarved journalist finding a job now is next to zero. Perhaps another type of job in a private establishment, but even that is very difficult. The market is very tough in journalism, whether you're not headscarved, or whether you're male. (Ayşe, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER HALL, ANKARA)

Wearing a headscarf might be a source of prejudice and a barrier to communication for the journalist especially when she establishes face-to-face contact with the person she is talking to.

You have problems like – for example it goes like this: I'm preparing a program on politics. No problem when we talk with the guests over the phone; but when we are face to face, they say things like "I had no idea you'd be a headscarved woman, it's actually interesting for me that you work here as a headscarved woman, preparing this program." The background of that is this: "how come someone like you who expresses her view openly, who undertakes this kind of responsibility is headscarved?" There's that prejudice, directly – with some of the guests who come here, you develop quite a close relationship over the phone, but as soon as you're face to face with them, communication comes to a sudden halt. They get used to you over time, but there's always that first reaction. When you go somewhere to a filming or photo shoot, like outside of the office, there might be problems. You go there, and after a while you see that communication slows down and then stops. (Sena, Group Interview, Television Producers, 6 April 2010, Television Building, ISTANBUL)

Headscarved journalists want neither problems nor so-called affirmative action because of the headscarf.

That's right, they don't want to put their institution at a disadvantage in terms of access to the story or to create trouble for their employee. The employee might similarly be disturbed by that. But as life went on we saw very few exceptions to this, unfortunately. When I was an intern – I didn't work as a correspondent for a long time; but I was an intern correspondent at the ... daily – I guess we went to this press conference by ... So there was this correspondent right by me, a correspondent with years of experience, and I was the accompanying intern who was shooting photographs. I was the only headscarved person there. There were many interns, but ... got interested in

me directly, not that it was something negative, but that person said “pay attention to her, she’s quite sharp, she’s going to make a great journalist one day”. So sometimes you see yourself through a perspective of affirmative action. There were a lot of journalism interns, you saw them everywhere, but I was the only person who captured the attention of the crowd. He felt urged to make a lot of affirmative statements. When you ask “who is the different one here”, the answer you get is “right, that would be me”. So being on your own there can be disturbing in that kind of environment. Because we had a lot of negative experiences due to that, the university, being allowed-denied access to classroom etc. (Halime, Group Interview, Television Producers, 6 April 2010, Television Building, ISTANBUL)

The headscarf ban poses an obstacle not just when practicing as a journalist, but also over the course of relations with professional organizations.

In terms of discrimination in journalism, we had this issue: There’s this yellow Member of Press card. It’s issued by the Press and Information General Directorate under the Prime Ministry. So you apply there, but they don’t issue the card to headscarved women, like if the photo is headscarved. So, for those reasons they didn’t issue the card to a colleague who worked at the ... Daily. She went to court, after that she submitted a photo without the headscarf, they still didn’t issue the card. This is because they knew she was a headscarved woman, they didn’t issue a card even after the headshot without the headscarf. So she went to the Council of State, to the court... She was able to obtain her card with a no-headscarf photo through the intervention of the court. Actually there’s no criterion for the issuance of the card... Like, I applied once, too, with a headshot of me with a headscarf. They didn’t issue it. And then I stopped fighting, I told myself I am not getting this card. The Directorate did something like this, too: They asked for an opinion from the Council of State, without there even being a case. They asked ‘if they could issue a card to a headscarved person’. The Council of course said no. At that time there were a lot of stories on that in the news media, there were other individuals, they could not obtain their cards either. Headscarved journalists appeared in a lot of stories then. Once it became quite clear that we would not be able to obtain the card, I put the whole issue aside. Recently I got it with a no-headscarf headshot, people around me told me to get it just in case. At that time it was more difficult to get it, these days you might be able to get it with a no-headscarf photo. So, I got it like that, and I am not really using it quite often. (Ayşe, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

5.1.1.5. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND ADVERTISING

Just like the other professions we discussed above, the public relations and advertising industry requires that you get into contact with various institutions and organizations during the day. We heard a couple of times that the headscarf was referred to as “visual pollution” among public relations and advertising specialists:

I survived with a wig, graduated with honors, all the communication students around me generally came from show-off, affluent families, the majority of them was like that, they spent their time at the movies, bars, cafes, theaters entertaining until late night and maybe not even able to wake up for class the next morning, while I worked really hard day in and day out and graduated as an honor student. I used to pass on class notes to everyone, in my class I developed a good reputation among people, perhaps an excessive reputation, but some of the friends who didn't know how I was outside looked at me wearing a wig, threw humiliating looks at me as if to condescend me. All that of course disturbed me deeply, like there were times I couldn't help shedding tears when walking, see, normally it's not very nice to be crying when you're among strangers, if I lost control of myself I might have needed psychological assistance. But I was full of energy for life, I liked singing, and I didn't let them crush me. We had both a radio and TV station at the School of Communication, they were part of the university, but I was not allowed to work there because I was wearing a wig, and I had a very neat appearance, I paid a lot of attention to how I looked, my wig never fell to the ground or something like that, I kept it combed all the time, nobody ever said "look how nasty she looks"... People and my professors appreciated me all the time, of course it was hurtful to study with that wig, I was the target of those looks, so I could not work at the television, I couldn't improve myself, and so I worked for free at a very important radio station in Konya, but I was able to express myself and I communicated my message, and I believe I did say good things. (Sümeyye, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER ANKARA)

We had both a radio and TV station at the School of Communication, they were part of the university, but I was not allowed to work there because I was wearing a wig,

The following account by a woman who put on the headscarf after graduating from university, and in fact after joining professional life, about liberal business circles suggests that headscarved women were not approached warmly in the advertising business:

Let me put it this way, before I began wearing a headscarf, I worked at many interactive agencies and different companies. At all times I knew this: I was saying there were no headscarved women around me. It was all women without headscarves. I also worked at advertising agencies in this sector. A headscarved woman was not really welcome in that sector. I was aware that I would not be welcome. I never thought of wearing a headscarf when I was working. I didn't even see a headscarved secretary in the environments I've worked at. I decided to begin wearing it after I established my own business. (Müjde, Face-to-Face Interview, 9 April 2010, ISTANBUL)

5.1.1.6. FINANCIAL CONSULTING

An individual who has a university degree in finance and works at a financial consulting office needs to be in touch with (1) corporate clients, (2) the professional chamber, (3) government offices (tax office, title deed register etc.). But the tests that need to be taken to start a career in certified accounting/financial consulting and be promoted later on most often keep headscarved women away from the profession and the business life, or force them to focus on positions with lower status.

Kevser: Indeed, I had a hard time kicking off my career. It was not a jump start, it took a great deal of researching. What did I look for when I was searching for a job? As I said, I really liked the accounting field, but I could not specialize in it, I really would have wanted to work as a financial consultant.

D.C.: You can work as a financial consultant, small firms also hire for that position.

Kevser: That's right, but in order for me to be a financial consultant, I need to take certain tests. And I need to take off my headscarf to be able to take them. And I know that they don't really offer financial consulting positions to headscarved women... (Focus Group, 8 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL)

When headscarved women do not have any hopes for promotion within the company, they are kept in positions of both lower status and lower pay. As the following example shows, being posted to the preliminary accounting department instead of the general accounting department entails settling for lower status and pay at the expense of the higher ones otherwise within reach.

Kevser: Instead of the general accounting department, I worked at a simpler position at the preliminary accounting department.

D.C.: What does that mean? What is the difference?

Kevser: Even a high-school graduate can take care of preliminary accounting tasks. You don't need to have a university degree for that. The calculations are much simpler, with a pen and paper you could do it all. No knowledge of general accounting is required.

D.C.: So, does that mean the job is boring, or the pay lower?

Kevser: Of course it means a lower pay. And considering what I do – like for four years you studied with all the accompanying trouble – like I can't support my family. I am of course a Muslim woman, like, if a co-worker of mine who does not wear the headscarf can work at that position, I too should be able to do that. [My family] supported me even when they didn't have the means. You want to have your own life that is not dependent on them. But unfortunately you cannot do that. You only get a certain wage, you're talking to certain people. You're addressing people of lower education with a formal "you", and they understand. That's what I've been through, unfortunately. (Focus Group, 8 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL)

In my phone conversations, I had to tell them I was headscarved. They told us “we go to public offices and it won’t be appropriate to do that with a headscarved woman accompanying”.

5.1.1.7. ENGINEERS

Companies employing engineers also expects them to communicate with the clients, co-workers, other companies, public relations companies, municipalities and state officials. An engineer’s job is not limited to the particular desk and office of the company in which she began to work. (1) She goes to meetings with customers. Some of them would be public persons. Likewise, as part of the job, the engineer might be expected to travel to the (2) municipal building (3) title deed register (4) tax office. Because of all the obstacles she would face when accessing these public organizations, a headscarved engineer might have a hard time finding a job in a major company, and have to work at small jobs paying low wages in small- or medium-sized enterprises.

In my phone conversations, I had to tell them I was headscarved. They told us “we go to public offices and it won’t be appropriate to do that with a headscarved woman accompanying”. [Salaries] range from TL 1,200 to TL 1,500. In my case, I have no choice other than small- and medium-sized enterprises. (Şükran, Focus Group, 3 April 2010, ISTANBUL)

In addition, they noted that they were not seen as equal individuals, but as a sister in the “family”, and therefore they were not treated as the equivalents of professional men.

Let me tell you this also, on the contrary, the “green capitalists” [popular term used for pious Muslim people with capital] will employ you in a protective spirit and tell you ‘this is what I can pay you’. Moreover, both the customer and the boss will treat you as if you’re a “sister”. You’re not an engineer there, in order to make them take you as an engineer, you need to go the extra mile. (Ceydanur, Focus Group, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

The women said an engineer talks to various groups of men ranging from customers to truckers over the course of the day, and they were not taken seriously because they were headscarved:

For instance, I worked at a place that manufactured trucks. Our customers were people who had fleets or who owned trucks. When they come to the office, they address you with very informal references , like “sister”, or they think you’re part of the accounting staff. Later, when money becomes part of

the process, you're then the engineer or manager. You need to leave your mark by way of what you do. Yet when they hire a woman engineer who is not headscarved, she would already be perceived in that capacity. (Ceydanur, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

5.1.1.8 OTHER PROFESSIONS

For headscarved physicians, too, there are obstacles and discriminatory practices starting at the beginning of their career and going on throughout their professional life. In order to complete the process of professional specialization, a physician (1) needs to take the Medical Specialty Test, (2) attend training sessions held in hospitals for purposes of professional training after schoolwork (3) establish relations with professional organizations. Also, nurses might need to (1) attend trainings in other hospitals and (2) take certain tests. Additionally, to be able to perform their jobs, sociologists, psychologists, physical therapy and rehabilitation specialists need to maintain similar types of relations and communication networks. Thus, a headscarved woman working as a professional in job markets will not be able to meet with certain customers, companies, institutions, or attend meetings in public offices. As would be expected of them, companies might then have second thoughts about hiring headscarved women whom they might otherwise have planned to employ in active positions.

...

Due to the structural difficulties discussed above in relation to certain professions, headscarved women suffer discrimination at various levels in job markets. To remind briefly, the main issues that emerged in our interviews and focus group discussions with professional headscarved women are as follows: Headscarved women face various discriminatory practices in (1) recruitment (2) wage policies (3) the course of professional life and (4) lay-offs, without regard to the political context of the institution they work for.

5.2. THE EFFECT OF THE HEADSCARF ON RECRUITMENT

This particular structure of job markets is as much known to professional headscarved women as it is to many business owners. The challenges faced in recruitment for public-sector jobs involve mainly a headshot photo without a headscarf and taking tests without the headscarf on, while the conduct of a headscarved woman upon being hired is subject to the different practical attitudes of the institution and manager she would work for. Women who do not acquiesce to prompts to remove their headscarves are at best kept in back offices where they are not visible, or be subjected to disciplinary entries in their personal records. Some of the women told they took their headscarves off while working

in such a situation, covered their heads at the gate of the school or department, and some others said they wore a wig when working:

Working with a headscarf in a public job is forbidden or extremely difficult, but private-sector jobs involve similar and even more complicated troubles. Not all private companies hire headscarved women. An attire involving the headscarf and full body covering is considered unacceptable in the first place because it does not go well with the 'modern' company image, without regard to whether such attire has anything to do with job performance directly.

I was 15 when I began wearing the headscarf. That was when I started high school. [...] If I were working at a public institution, not wearing a headscarf and working at any hospital, my current salary would have tripled. Right now I am getting paid three times less than them, and working longer hours, because I have no other choice. And the people here say "you don't have any other choice, either you're going to go to some other place and remove your headscarf, or you will settle for this much money and stay here with us". The more pressure there is on people's choices, the more exploitation there will be, that's what I believe. Afterwards, I had interviews with a few hospitals. Let me actually give you the name of one of them. It's in Tunali, where the girls wear pretty uniforms, which in today's language is called 'modern' –after all we're the backward people(!) They told me I have no place among all those 'modern' people. Very politely, they said "we have our own procedure on cloth and attire, we have this uniform", I was required to wear an above-knee skirt, and if necessary they were working in the labs with these t-shirts with short sleeves. So, because you don't fit with all that, they politely say "if you will follow that, we might consider hiring you". As if saying why did you bother coming here, goodbye, if you won't do that... (Hülya, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

Therefore, headscarved women have to develop certain strategies against the discriminatory practices they will face during recruitment. For instance, a graduate fresh off the university needs to put together a resume and submit it to companies. When the headscarf is involved, this becomes an issue requiring further thought and strategy development. A decision needs to be made on whether a headshot photo will be inserted in the resume. There is a chance that a photo resume might not be taken seriously because it would not go well with "corporate image", while a no-photo resume might trigger the same treatment during the job interview.

Yet another strategy is to state explicitly that one is headscarved. A journalist who had to look for a job because the daily she worked for was hit by financial trouble notes that the first to be laid off were the headscarved women, and discusses the issue as follows:

I was out for a bunch of interviews, for stories on culture and arts. There were no more headscarved women in the company. We submitted our CVs to a few places. When we submit a no-photo CV, we added a note that we were headscarved. (Rojin, Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL)

In addition, as the excerpt below shows, women's responsibilities which may arise from pregnancy and childbirth might be considered a fault on their part and set a challenge during recruitment, without regard to whether a public or private company is involved:

For instance I can comment on engineering, my husband is an electrical engineer, that's how I know what I'm about to tell you. They never prefer women as staff members. Like, she can't go to the site, she would have her period, she would have this issue, pregnancy, childbirth, she can't concentrate... (Asiye, Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL)

5.3. THE EFFECT OF THE HEADSCARF ON WAGE POLICIES

When we asked how headscarved women were treated in job markets, the women we talked with said their wages were lower than those of others – both males and women who are not headscarved –

[...] well, the gentlemen told exactly this to me: your CV is OK, but it's a great risk to employ a woman, like they get married and then leave the job, but we see this as a matter of social responsibility, our headscarved sisters and stuff like that. I told them what I could contribute to the place, see, two years ago I started a job at TL 1,000 per month, now they offered me the same salary. That is, they say "OK" to you, but offer a low wage. The way they look at it is this, you actually need us, like while they are employing qualified staff, they do so at a very very low cost: it's cheap labor for them. They think they will save like that. But if it was a male who had that position, I'd be ashamed to even offer that kind of money. I don't think they would have talked to a male like that. And then they said, you know, we don't know how much your husband makes, but women with university degrees take TL 500-600, so I should be comfortable with what they offer, since there were people who were working for lower wages. (Nadide, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

In one sense, it may be claimed that the headscarf ban in public-sector jobs creates an advantage for the private sector. Had the headscarved women been "working as a government employee", they would have been much closer to equal pay for equal work, but the necessity to get a private-sector job forces these women to accept lower wages.

5.4. THE EFFECT OF THE HEADSCARF AT WORK

5.4.1. PREGNANCY AND THE HEADSCARF

Becoming a mother, as women know, is potentially a cause for dismissal, and they deal with this special period carefully. Realizing that it is not easy to survive in job markets as a woman, and a headscarved one at that, they implement strategies such as serving late notices of their pregnancy to the companies they work for:

My workplace is a highly male-dominant one, and I didn't inform the company of my pregnancy until I was six months into it. (Firuze, Focus Group 2, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

Headscarved women, who are admitted only thanks to the 'courtesy' of employers anyway, are being asked to nod to every other difficulty in business life. Because the women are not in contexts in which they could negotiate motherhood-parenting roles within the family and job markets would not be supportive of that negotiation, motherhood continues to be a highly valued role for the professional and educated woman who sacrifices a great deal for that role:

At that time I realized teaching was a very good profession for being a mother. I started looking for a job as if I was a recent graduate... [couldn't find one]. I began interviewing for jobs in the food industry. I started a job again in a catering firm. I worked there for about three years. I was laid off upon becoming a mother, on the grounds that I spent too much time with my baby and not much on the job. Because I had to work outside of regular working hours, the kids needed to be picked up from school. After a break of one year, I started here. I am not sure if the employers will be able to tolerate... (Şükran, Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, TESEV, ISTANBUL)

It was noted over and over that the private sector, especially small-sized enterprises, is using natural processes such as pregnancy and childbirth, which are a consequence of women's biological differences, to put women at a disadvantage over the course of their participation in job markets. Women can easily enjoy their rights accorded in labor laws and be protected legally only when they have public-sector jobs. Considering that women have a hard time acquiring the right to work with social security coverage in real markets, it is easier to understand the mechanisms that keep them away from the business world. One of our discussants described the situation as follows:

[...] see, it's not just the issue of low pay. Sometimes they don't even bother to pay your social security, like, you work without coverage. Then you raise the issue. You raise it, but no result, like, you know there's no other job out there, you can't quit. There's an economic crisis in Turkey anyway, there's not much hiring whether you're a man or a woman, it does not make any difference, women are not given primary consideration, if you're headscarved, you need to

go to certain places, and when those places are exploiting you, you tell yourself, well I want to do something but if I stay home, I will at least be physically relaxed, mentally relaxed, you say let me stay home, but you don't really want that, I mean, once you've been involved in certain things, it's not nice to withdraw for this or that reason. (Duygu, Focus Group 2, 26 March , 2010, ANKARA)

5.4.2. THE ROLE OF THE HEADSCARF IN RECOGNITION AND PROMOTION PROCESSES

The headscarf also poses an obstacle in terms of recognition and promotion of employees by the employers. The women said there were not many headscarfed women in higher management in the business world, which they thought was a major problem for the recognition of up and coming headscarfed women and currently employed women in that world.

As a woman, you're by default treated as a second-class citizen. We recruit staff for companies. Last year, we offered consulting for a company that hires for shopping malls. Even when an incoming customer is headscarfed herself, there's this B-C group, even people in that group don't want to see a headscarfed employee in the store. Even a customer who is herself headscarfed does not want to see an employee like that... So when you're headscarfed, the moment you put it on, you're not even second class, but third class. It is as if you're not supposed to be there. This bothers not just the women who do not wear it, but also those who indeed do. Even an old man with a beard is bothered by a headscarfed woman driving a car. I actually never heard a headscarfed woman becoming a high-level manager. Is there such a woman, do you know of one? I never heard of one. (İncilay, Focus Group Women Entrepreneurs, 9 April 2010, MÜSİAD, ISTANBUL)

Even in municipal offices where women are given relatively more recognition, the status of a "chief officer" is not offered to headscarfed women, as it was noted:

In municipal companies, for instance, no headscarfed woman is given the position of "chief officer". But there are chief officers among women who are not headscarfed. (Rojin, Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ISTANBUL)

Headscarfed women with professional jobs are being asked to remain "invisible" when they find jobs and not demand roles involving active and high status performance. There are various ways in which headscarfed women are requested to stay invisible. One way would be to debate and negotiate in terms of the size of the headscarf. As the excerpt below illustrates, the firm made an issue of the headscarf's dimensions after hiring a headscarfed woman, and led the way to the woman's resignation:

I started working at the public relations office of a hospital in the province of Bursa. First they hired me and then they said they can't employ me while I am wearing a headscarf, later they asked me to change the way it looks, to tie it differently, as they called it, to tie it in a modern way. And then I had this dress on, about the size of a school uniform, they didn't want that, either. They were somewhat obsessed with the appearance. Then I started working as an intern in the public relations department. And later I was laid off. Or actually, I quit the job. When they let me loose, I didn't take it off, and instead I quit the job. (Sevda, Focus Group, 8 May 2010, *Mevlevi Sofrası* Restaurant, KONYA)

Upon realizing that they cannot survive in business life while wearing a headscarf, a group of women decided to work by putting on a wig, having to choose to remain invisible in that fashion. The major issue with the wig is that women themselves are disturbed when they see themselves wearing a wig. Even if the work environment has no problem with that, they cannot be themselves in that kind of appearance, and do not want to work at places requiring that as a condition. A journalist interviewee was deterred from applying to TRT, the state-owned television and radio network, as a result:

I told myself I wanted to practice my own craft. I asked a friend if there was a headscarf problem at the TRT facility in Ankara. She said "right now you need to put on a wig to work there". See, you won't ever be in a visible section anyways, and you could put together a story as a freelancer and send it to them. (Rojin, Focus Group 1, 3 April 2010, ISTANBUL)

Not being around with a headscarf and accepting invisibility does not mean yielding to discrimination. That is because the women are very well aware of this situation, that is, of their visibility.

In terms of working, we could have thrown in the towel—not in the sense of standing aside, though – in many cases, we could have had much more active jobs in many places, but what did we do? We had to move ourselves to the side. We wanted to experience the invisibility. When you're visible, you get a reaction. I don't know, maybe we too could have wanted to be university faculty, academics, or get involved in politics. (Leyla, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, ANKARA)

As discussed above, the concerns of headscarved women and their workplaces stem from the tight relationship between the public and the private in the world of business. A headscarved woman who is around and visible far too frequently might be harming the company image. Headscarved women said they could not have the kind of publicity which would have enabled them to claim accomplishment of the very tasks they completed, in order to prevent harming the image of their companies. For instance, an interviewee who offered consulting for a television

company said she held a roundtable but she couldn't attend it herself because of the headscarf.

You face the issue of representation because you're headscarved. For instance, I work as the coordinator of the ... program at the TV. I provide outside support, but I can't go there or my name isn't in the credits. (Firuze, Focus Group 1, 27 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

5.5. HEADSCARF AND LAY-OFF

When firms need to shrink especially during a period of crisis, headscarved women are among the first to be laid off. Employers openly say "as a woman you're not supposed to provide for your family in any case, so it's normal that you leave the job first", and base the process on a rationality fed by their religiousness.

The ban (headscarf ban) took effect in 1999. At that time I started working (at a newspaper)... but I guess they felt the pressure and all of a sudden they laid off the women, not the men. I was doing feature reports. We were not the newspaper's visible aspect. So there was a financial crisis and they needed to lay off some people, and they said "you don't provide for your families anyway" and laid us off... (Rojin, Focus Group, 3 April 2010, ISTANBUL)

5.6. RELIGIOUS-CONSERVATIVE BUSINESS ENVIRONMENTS AND HEADSCARVED WOMAN EMPLOYEES

When we began this study, one of our goals was to understand the attitudes of religious and conservative business owners toward the headscarf and towards employing headscarved women in their businesses. As noted above, headscarved women who are unable to find positions in major companies and public offices were able to work at small-sized enterprises. But in those work environments, headscarved women had to accept lower wages and longer working hours and limited opportunities for moving up the ranks. Employers of headscarved women who worked at small-sized businesses generally were religious and conservative businessmen. Some interviewees said those employers' positive attitude to recruiting headscarved women resulted not from their religiousness, but from their wish to take advantage of the opportunity to employ at lower wages individuals who would not be able to find a job elsewhere. In situations like that, religiousness becomes an instrument of rationalizing the discrimination practiced by the company:

When it comes to actual work, they say you're a woman and this is where you can do your work, you can be here, not that it is something only headscarved women face, a woman is always second class, so these same issues you find with them too, things are even worse in our situation because it is a major problem that you're headscarved...

So, instead of "you're a woman, stay where you are", it becomes "you're a woman, you're headscarved, so accept the lower wage..."

They say, “well, alright, work here, but you’re headscarved, you won’t be able to find a job elsewhere anyway, so this is how much we can offer you, take this and work with that”. But if they really cared about religion, they would have known what our prophet said –pay the worker before his sweat dries up. From that perspective, reducing what she is entitled to just because she is headscarved is a violation of her God-given right... (Sevim, Focus Group 2, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

So, instead of “you’re a woman, stay where you are”, it becomes “you’re a woman, you’re headscarved, so accept the lower wage...”

The discussants told that religious and conservative employers also rationalize low wages by arguing that women are not required to provide for their families and it is inevitable for men to have higher wages because of their responsibility to do so:

Nadide: ‘Green’ capital offers you lower wages because you’re both a woman and headscarved.

Ayşe: We sometimes expect affirmative action if we share similar views, but in reality none of that happens. What happens in fact is the exact opposite. A friend of mine told me this. Even if we don’t work at private jobs, we know it from the experiences of our acquaintances. Like, you are the one who needs them, it’s you. So when you think about it like that, you’re not able to earn the wage paid to a colleague in the same field in a corporate company.

Zekiye: Contrary to expectations, ‘green’ capital exploits you more.

Nadide: I also had a private-sector job. In the first firm I worked for, when there was a group from Malaysia, I would be at the forefront, but when it was a government group, [I was told] “Mrs. ..., please stay out of sight for a while”. I told [my boss] “you’re paying a very low salary”. It’s less than the statutory minimum, think about it, it’s around TL 800. A starting engineer earns TL 1,500 at other companies. I asked “Why is the wage so low?” See, of the twenty or so engineers in that place, ten were headscarved. He said “you don’t have any other option. If I don’t pay that, you won’t be able to find a better paying job somewhere else.” But this doesn’t apply to men... That’s the fact. (Focus Group, 26 March 2010, ANKARA)

In other words, it was recounted often that religious-conservative business circles did not accord headscarved women the regard and value they deserved for their professional accomplishments, as the two examples above show. In particular, headscarved women who had no choice but to work at the businesses owned by religious and conservative employers were bitter when they told that the discrimination they faced in these businesses sometimes was also due to their employers’ reckonings about “outward appearance” presented to customers.

'Green' capital operates contrary to expectations: 'They [the headscarved women] need us, I'll pay the lowest wage and she'll work here, she can't go anywhere else, she's bound to do that'. Even that low-pay job is a backstage one. Like, not in a place where you're visible. If there will be two headscarved women in the secretariat of the newspaper I work at, they don't really like that, they say 'one wearing a headscarf and one who doesn't' or 'no headscarved women there'. It's as if they want to present the right image to outsiders, like a shop window. (Ayşe, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

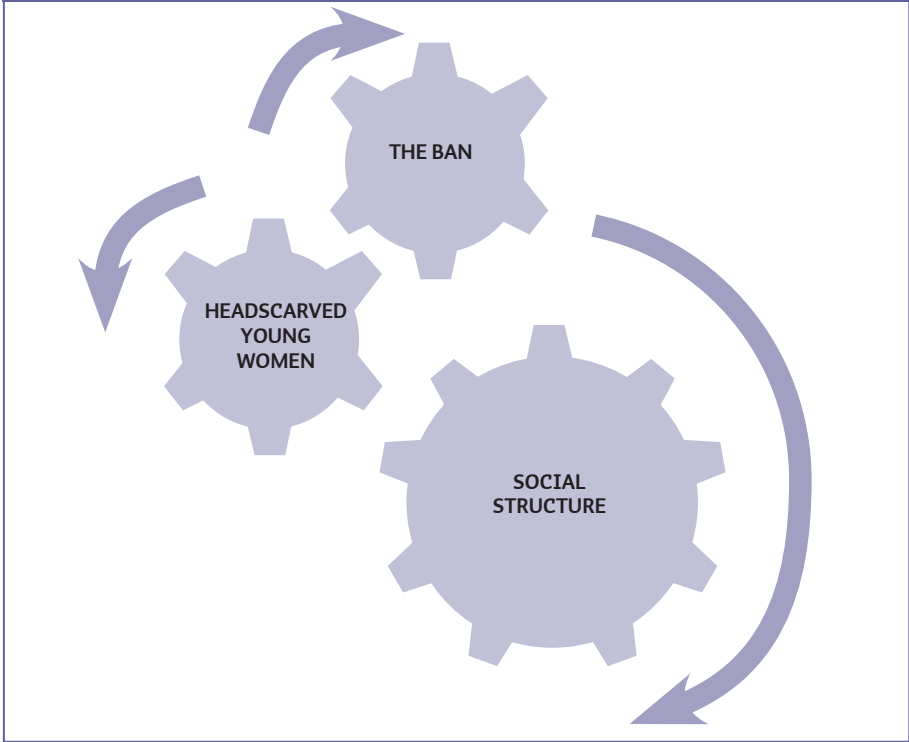
Despite these discriminatory practices, religious-conservative employers might also claim that employing headscarved women is a matter of "social responsibility" for them, as shown in a previous excerpt.

A discussant who is a member of a political party's Central Decision-Making and Administrative Committee tells that the headscarf is perceived as a problem everywhere and by all segments of society, and relates how she felt obliged to get involved in politics after she was not able to find a spot for herself in a public or private environment:

In terms of women, because it is extremely difficult to have a public-sector job due to the headscarf ban, the only remaining option is to work in a private position. While public jobs are preferred thanks to regular working hours, relatively low but continued pay, and social benefits such as coverage and job security, it is nearly impossible for them to have these jobs because of the headscarf ban. And women are kept away from job markets because of the discrimination they face in areas of pay and promotion.

And another issue is this: once you go through the door, you're already one point behind in the game. Whatever organization you go to, whether it's public, private, green, red... The headscarf is perceived as a problem. It's like this. When it's a man who has the same ideas as I do, you can't know he thinks like that. But when it's me, there's no way you can tell "that's not the way I think", because all of you reveals what you're thinking. This issue of throwing in the towel, right, I realized that in the rooms of a public hospital – eventually I was laid off – I guess I was the one intern unable to move to a permanent position after waiting for the longest period of time. And you know, we didn't give in so easily. All the lawsuits, lawyers, higher courts – that was the 2001-2002 period – it was all going fine. With a little more effort, so the Justice and Development Party was about to assume power, but first I was laid off, and then they came to power. Well, not much changed after they came to power, but you just remain hopeful... So, when that domain is closed to you, what do you do? You could be a private instructor, apply to NGOs. I chose politics [...]. So you find a space for yourself. (Selma, Focus Group 1, 26 March 2010, MAZLUM-DER, ANKARA)

Figure 3: The Mechanism of Discrimination



In sum:

(1) It might be considered a limiting factor for a private employer to employ professional headscarved women. Given the structure of professional jobs, a headscarved woman will not be able to establish the contacts she needs to with other persons and institutions and organizations in public and private sectors, attend meetings, or visit others. Therefore, it might not be a very sensible and rational idea to invest in an individual who is not admitted to this communication network and needs to be invisible.

(2) In addition, hiring a professional headscarved woman might be considered an opportunity by the private employer. This will give the employer the chance to access an equivalent service at a much lower cost, and longer working hours and postponed promotions dictated by the employer by taking advantage of the fragile situation of such a woman in business life might be considered a more profitable investment. Furthermore, in other situations, employing a headscarved woman might equip the employer with a “socially responsible” image, which might help the employer to clear the conscience and enjoy more reputation outside.

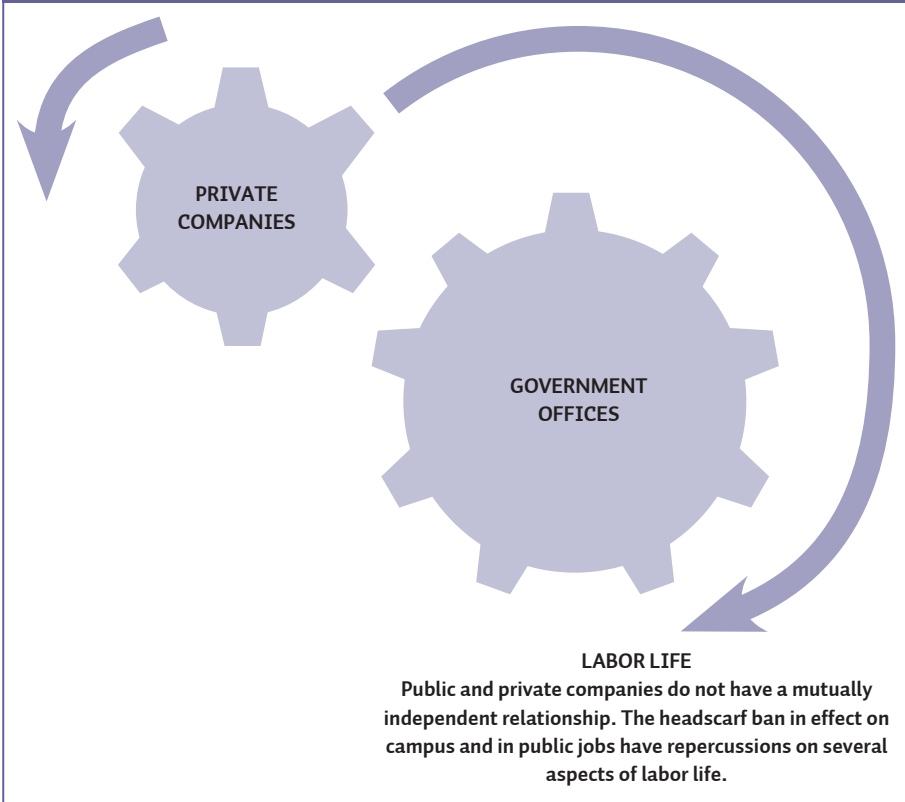
In Place of a Conclusion

All forms of discrimination need to be rendered visible so that they can be prevented. The discrimination women suffer in the business world through the headscarf, however, is not visible. The public subscribes to the general idea that the headscarf is being restricted on campus and one is not, if wearing a headscarf, allowed to have a public job, but that there is no problem in the private sector. As this report has shown, the headscarf ban puts women at a disadvantage in business life not only in the public sector, but also in the private sector. The ban in effect with respect to the public sector has a spillover effect in the private sector. Accordingly, any arrangement that will be put in place with regard to instances of discrimination resulting from the headscarf ban should encompass not only the domain of education, but instead the entire world of labor.

The conclusions reached in this study might offer various interpretations of the effect of the headscarf ban on business life: First of all, the following are worthy of note in regards to professional headscarved women who are the subject of this work:

1. It is extremely difficult for headscarved women to access public-sector job opportunities because of the headscarf ban in effect in that sector. In comparison with the private sector, the public sector might be considered more attractive by women due to regular business hours and job security in public sector jobs. Women who are having a hard time finding public-sector jobs have no option but to work in the private sector. And when they do work in private jobs, they might have to assume positions with low status and pay because of the spillover effect of the headscarf ban, and they also have trouble in promotions. During periods of economic crisis and shrinking, headscarved women might be among the first to be laid off.
2. The discrimination professional headscarved women suffer when entering the business world does not in essence stem from their own religiousness or obstructions posed by their own families, but in fact from the headscarf ban in public-sector jobs and the spillover effect of the ban on the private sector.
3. Barriers before women's participation in the business world define the women only within the space of the home, and feed the traditional, patriarchal and gender-based interfamily division of labor which keeps the women at home and assigns them a dependent role in the family.

Figure 4: Relations Between Public and Private Companies; The Spillover Effect of the Headscarf Ban



Considering the results of this study in relation to women who do not wear a headscarf, the following points emerge:

1. The fact that the majority of women finds it difficult to survive in job markets will inevitably result in the rise of an ideology that supports and reproduces the practice of women staying home. The rise of a value system in which the woman is dependent on the man and that hails the ideology of 'a woman confined to the home' will have repercussions not only on the religious and the headscarved, but on all women in society.
2. Deterring headscarved women from job markets will adversely affect the struggle of women who are not headscarved against the discrimination they face in business life as women. For the sake of the unity of the struggle for women's business life, the effects of the headscarf ban must be a part of the larger picture.

The effect of the ban can also be interpreted in terms of fairness in job markets and women's participation in labor life:

(1) As long as the headscarf ban remains on the agenda, it might be considered a limiting factor for an employer to employ professional headscarved women. Given the structure of professional jobs, a headscarved woman will not be able to establish the contacts she needs to establish with other persons and institutions and organizations in public and private sectors, attend meetings, or socialize. Therefore, for the employer, it might not be a very sensible and rational idea to invest in an individual who might be considered a problem for that type of interactions and needs to be invisible.

(2) In addition, and still as a result of the headscarf ban, hiring a headscarved woman might be considered an opportunity by the employer. This will give the employer the chance to access an equivalent service at a much lower cost, and longer working hours and postponed promotions dictated by the employer by taking advantage of the fragile situation of such a woman in business life might be considered a more profitable investment. Furthermore, in other situations, employing a headscarved woman might equip the employer with a "socially responsible" image, which might help the employer to clear his/her conscience and establish a good reputation.

(3) In a society where educated women cannot fully participate in job markets, the companies and the society will be devoid of the creativity, productivity and solution-oriented thinking of the female workforce. The losses arising from this situation is a serious issue that must be taken into consideration by economists.

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