

A Gendered Perspective on Social Policies in Turkey: What Do Women Think?

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Abstract

Women's equal participation in all aspects of social, political and economic life is an essential requirement for sustainable development and democratic governance. How to engage women in these different spheres of policy increase their access to information and ensure their participation in policy debates are therefore among the key questions policymakers and scholars are actively seeking to answer. This study aims to contribute to this growing scholarship by examining Turkish women's views on gender equality at large, and current social policies targeting women in particular. The study examines a sample of 1218 women's views from a central province, Çankaya, in the capital city of Ankara. Of those in the sample, 41% work full time outside the home. Of the remaining group, 24% cites childcare, 19.5% cites spousal objections, and 15.5% cites housekeeping for reasons that keep them from seeking and keeping full time jobs. Among one of its interesting findings, the study shows a significant lack of women's civic engagement and/or interest in volunteer activities in organizations that take on gendered issues. A miserly 3.2% of the women interviewed report having participated in any civil society organizations that work on women's issues. A further statistical analysis of participating women's views highlight a clear age and education divide among the women, which in turn shapes whether they perceive the current social policy changes positively. Of those recent policy changes, the well-recognized one concerns equality after divorce. 90.3% of the women interviewed recalled the recent policy change giving women the equal rights over assets accumulated during marriage. When asked, majority of women noted domestic violence and lack of employment opportunities respectively as top two concerns Turkish women face at the moment.

Key words: gender equality, social policies, Turkey, women's rights.

Introduction

It is now widely accepted that for societies to develop in a sustainable and peaceful manner, women equal participation in all aspects of social, political and economic life has to be achieved first and foremost (Hablemitoğlu, 2005). Falling short of equality while has had negative impacts for societies at large, impeding gender roles and gender relations, the most significant of those impacts have been felt by women themselves, locking them into strict social categories (Attanapola, 2004, Aylazve ark., 2014).

In societies gender roles are mainstreamed to collective consciousness with the availability and access to recourses, which often discriminates against women. Gender inequality while starts with individual's acceptance of society's categories of gender roles and gendered relations but only realized and sustained with the access to and availability of public and social resources (Balkır, 2012). It is these social and political structures of power that determines an individual's rights to various opportunities, resources and services promised in any given society. It is therefore essential that these judgements of such deservedness must be made regardless of one's gender and provide women and men with equal access to all benefits (Öztan 2004, Şimşek, 2011).

When studied from the perspective of gender relations, two broad social policy trends can be identified in the post 1980 Turkey. The earlier social policy approach adopted and perpetuated the belief that women's labor market participation was transitory and not permanent. It therefore encouraged women's dependency on the 'family' for their social rights and supported their return to unpaid domestic sphere (Ecevit, 1995). Lately however the dominant social policy discourse has been, albeit superficially, accepting and supportive of women's potential contribution to labor markets, and thus tries to reorganize women's social rights around her employment. This latter approach further adopts a contradictory secondary layer as it continues with the earlier references to family and sharing of responsibilities within families without proposing any solutions to help ease women's burden within the household (Durudoğan, Gökşen, Oder and Yükseser, 2010).

The 1982 Constitution of the Republic of Turkey recognizes equality as a fundamental right in its various articles and promises its protection and security by the state. Indirectly, it further emphasizes the need for and the commitment by the state to apply positive discrimination towards women and 'other disadvantaged' groups in all aspects of state policy. The newly articulated constitution further eliminates any remaining vagueness and instead establishes gender equality as a front and center goal and principle for all public institutions to follow (Doğan, 2013). The National Parliament of Turkey formally established the Commission for Opportunity Equality of Women and Men in its legislation numbered 5840 and with its publishing in the Formal Newspaper on March 24, 2009. This Commission is charged with the task of follow national and international processes and developments in the area of gender equality with the purpose to formally report and provide policy guidance and recommendations to the National Assembly and its related commissions (Gökçimen, 2008).

Turkish Government has long promised its pursuit of gender equality not only with its constitution but also with its ratification of numerous international agreements and conventions including first and foremost the CEDAW (Convention to Eliminate All Kinds of Discrimination against Women). Additionally it has also signed European Social Pact, the UN's Convention on Children's Rights as well as various conventions by other international organizations such as ILO, OECD and AGIK taking on gender inequality. It participated in the drafting of the Action Plan of the International Conference on World Population and Development in Cairo, and signed similar action plans and commitments resulting from the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Beijing Declaration. It also systematically committed to achieve and pursue gender equality within various policies and legal changes by producing a national action plan to eliminate gender inequality directed by the European Accession negotiations (KSGM, 2008).

Responding to the dynamic social and demographic changes Turkey has been experiencing in recent years, gender discrimination policies have occupied a center stage in policy debates. The most significant changes in policies concerning women's rights have been reflected in the 2004 Constitutional alterations. Article 10 of the 2004 Constitution states that "women and men have equal rights. The state and government are responsible for making sure that equality is realized in practice. With this article, the state assumes responsibility that goes beyond eliminating gender based discrimination to achieving real equity between women and men in all aspect of life with the promise and delivery of equal opportunities on May 7, 2004 (KSGM, 2008).

On May 7, 2004, the article 90 of the Constitution had been extended to give priority to international conventions and agreements, such as CEDAW, on matters of civil rights and liberties if and when there a rise conflict between national legislation. Turkish Civil Code that designates civil rights and liberties for Turkish citizens have also been reassessed and restated in a way to reflect national and international changes pertaining to gender equality on January 1, 2002. Following the changes in the civil code, Family courts have been created and put into function within the larger legal system in 2003. With increasing emphasis placed on the prevention of domestic violence, a new set of laws and regulations titled "Family Protection Laws" have been legislated in 1998. With this set of laws, for the very first time in modern Turkish history, domestic violence is made a crime recognized by the legal and police forces without needing the victim's testimony and one that can be initiated by a third person. The law has even revised on May 4 2007 to interpret domestic violence more generally and beyond the immediate form of violence among spouses. Furthermore, the criminal law has been revised on June 1, 2005 to reassign crimes against women from its previous interpretation under crimes against society to crimes against individuals, and penalties have been strengthened. The most significant implication of this revision has been the for the punishments against honor crimes, making them punishable with life in prison, the heaviest penalty available under law. The current labor market regulations and employment laws that have been put into action in 2003 have achieved significant progress towards gender equality in the work place.

These changes have been legislated to provide job security to women against potential discrimination they may face during pregnancy and child birth and to ensure equal pay for equal work. Thus with the new Employment Law of 4857, flexible work arrangements have been secured and protected under the legal system (KSGM, 2008).

The first assessments of the initial steps taken by the government within the first five year plan towards achieving gender equality in Turkey highlight the formation of a new state commission to study the “Policies towards women” in 1987. This initial act was later followed by formation of the “Institute of Women’s Status” in 1990, and the enactment of the legislation numbered 5251 in 2004 reorganizing the organizational structure and responsibilities of the “Institute of Women’s Status”. On June 8, 2011, this institute has been brought under the newly minted Ministry of Family and Social Policies, and has been charged with the task of protecting women’s human rights, strengthening their participation in social, economic, cultural and political realms, and ensuring their equal rights and opportunities (KSGM, 2014).

Turkey has been noted as one of the countries with the deepest gender gap according to the World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Report in 2012. Gender gap report thus ranks countries according to four fundamental criteria: economic participation and opportunities, educational attainment, political participation and health and life expectancy (Hausmann, Tyson & Zahidi, 2012). Further research maintains that when women’s educational attainment increases, their fertility rates decline, which also corresponds to declining infant mortality rates, increasing quality of child care, further educational opportunities for girls. There is no doubt that educational attainment and employment opportunities significantly influence women’s quality of life. Unfortunately, in Turkey women’s educational attainment still lags behind men’s. Women’s illiteracy levels remain four times the similar levels for men. One out of every ten women remains illiterate. Women’s educational attainment further decreases after elementary schooling further highlighting the gender gap in terms of educational attainment and opportunities (TÜİK, 2011).

According to the April 2013 TÜİK research, while only 1.7% of men over the age of 15 were illiterate in Turkey, whereas the same percentage for the same age group of women was 8.4%. A similar research in 2011 has demonstrated that for every 100 women with a college degree there have been 149 men with comparable degrees (TÜİK, 2012a). According to TNSA 2013, women in urban areas fare better educationally compared to women living in rural areas. 35% of women in urban areas have at least a high school degree, whereas only 13% of women in rural areas have similar degrees (TNSA, 2013).

Women’s participation in labor markets have long been recognized as a necessary component of development. Unfortunately for Turkey, women’s labor market participation rates have been in a steady decline. In 1990 while 34% of women were participating in labor market, in 1995 this rate had declined to 30.6%, in 2000 to 26.6% and in 2004 to 25.4% and remained at 26.1% in 2009. Having noted the steady decline, women’s labor market participation rates have modestly increased to 27.6% in 2010 and 28.8% in 2012 and remained at 28.7% in 2014 (TÜİK, 2008, 2010, 2012b, 2014). Of women who are participation in labor market, 91.2% have been employed with no social protection (www.sosyal-is.org.tr).

The 2003 changes in the employment law forbid differentiated pay scales based on gender. The law however has been less effective in addressing gender based discrimination that stem from culturally segregated employment opportunities and gender based lay off at times of economic crisis. Socially approved gender segregated employment opportunities often times lock women into lower paying jobs with less responsibilities, and often with no social security benefits. These jobs are more prevalent in labor intensive sectors such as textiles, food preparation, fashion and tobacco, and more importantly in farming. In farming women are employed as unpaid family members, and by virtue of that status they fail to seek protection from social security (Tan et al. 2008). All of this demonstrates that while legal progress has been initiated towards gender equality, such formal changes fall short of achieving equality of employment security in reality.

Through structural and legal changes undertaken within larger development policies, Turkish women have increasingly been developing a collective consciousness on their rights of participation to all aspects of modern society. Yet, despite these legal reforms, their full participation has been limited by traditional gender roles (Koroğlu, 2006). According to Dökmen (2006), one of the most important impediments to achieving a modern and democratic society is gender inequality that is mainstreamed into day to day life. Akhun (2000) further confirms that in societies in which women and men are not allowed equal opportunities one could not seek and find a real democracy and notes that in Turkey this has been the unfortunate case when it comes to family responsibilities, access to education, and participation to labor markets as well as politics.

Especially in developing countries where resources are generally limited, women are found to be at a further disadvantage which becomes noticeable in areas of health services, domestic violence and related stresses. Research conducted in this area summarizes gender based disadvantages women face in Turkey by stressing that women often have less education compared to their spouses, they are discouraged to enter paid employment due to their exclusive responsibilities at home and child rearing, and that when they do have paid employment they have less control over spending and other family related decisions (Kalaycıoğlu ve Toprak, 2004, Örüçü at al. 2007, Şahiner, 2007, Günayve Bener 2011). Other research that studies younger generation's (university students) attitudes towards gender roles has confirmed equally conservative and patriarchal gender role expectations, especially among younger men compared to younger women. These studies note that while supporting family through paid employment was the most significant expectation from 'fathers', it was the last ranked expectation from "mothers". Especially when it comes to work-life balance, social life, marriage and family life, men are noted to carry on more traditional expectations (Tubin, 2004, Vefikuluçay at al. 2007, Aydın, 2010).

Thus the steady decline in women's labor market participation in Turkey in recent decades, demonstrates the urgency in which the government and civil society organizations need to address this issue. Towards that direction, a significant first step remains education. Educational attainment not only promises a more productive labor force, but also maintains that an educated woman is more likely to raise educated children, likely to have fewer kids and hence would contribute to controlled demographic expansion and development plans in the long term. As such studies examining the underlying factors behind the traditional gender roles need to be encouraged. Further, the government policies and civil society organizations need to cooperate and focus on elements that will increase women's labor market participation. (Berber, Eser and Yılmaz, 2008) In order to achieve gender quality in all aspects of life, long term policies and political strategies are necessary, which in turn need to be based on empirical studies on people expectations and views of those policies. This study therefore aims to contribute to that end by examining women's perspectives on gender equality at large, and on gender specific social policies in particular.

Method

Participants

The study examines a sample of 1218 women's views from a central province, Çankaya, in the capital city of Ankara. Of those in the sample, 41% work full time outside the home. Of the remaining group, 24% cites childcare, 19.5% cites spousal objections, and 15.5% cites housekeeping for reasons that keep them from seeking and keeping full time jobs. Among one of its interesting findings, the study shows a significant lack of women's civic engagement and/or interest in volunteer activities in organizations that take on gendered issues. A miserly 3.2% of the women interviewed report having participated in any civil society organizations that work on women's issues. A further statistical analysis of participating women's views highlight a clear age and education divide among the women, which in turn shapes whether they perceive the current social policy changes positively. Of those recent policy changes, the well-recognized one concerns equality after divorce. 90.3% of the women interviewed recalled the recent policy change giving women the equal rights over assets accumulated during marriage. When asked, majority of women noted domestic violence and lack of employment opportunities respectively as top two concerns Turkish women face at the moment.

Sample and Sampling Method

The study was carried out in the Kırkkonaklar community in the central province, Çankaya, in the capital city of Ankara. The sample of 1218 households were selected from a data base of 15950 families recorded at Çankaya health group presidency Kırkkonaklar health care center of the provincial directorate of health of Ankara. Households were chosen according to the "systematic sampling methodology" using house detection forms obtained from the health care center (Çingil, 1994).

Data Collection and Analyses

Home visits were made to families willing to participate in the research. The interviewers then conducted face to face interviews with women in those selected households concerning their views on gender equality and social policies towards women. The interviews were conducted by students studying at the Hacettepe University Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, during their summer internships June 4-July 3, 2013. The results were analyzed through use of SPSS program.

Views on gender roles have been analyzed and the Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) value of these data was found to be 0.877. The results of the factor analysis made on these data will be beneficial and useful. Bartlett's Sphericity test further confirmed a statistically significant correlation between variables and proved useful for further factor analysis ($X^2: 3774,870$, $sd:78$, $p<0,01$) The applied factor analysis eliminated the 3 variable from 14 to 11, and those 11 variables were analyzed on two dimensions with all factor strength results being over 0.400. As a result of the content validity, 11 items were classified into 2 sub-dimensions and all factor loads were above 0.400. The results according to these two dimensions are listed as below:

1. Variables affecting views on gender equality

Variables	Factor Strength	% of variance	realvalue
Factor 1 Negativeviews		28,703	3,157
Women's place is with her husband	0,734		
Politics is a man's domain	0,684		
Head of household needs to be a man	0,682		
It is a mother's duty to teach her daughter that first and foremost responsibility is to be a good wife and a good mother	0,678		
Professional woman cannot keep up with their household duties	0,564		
Under no circumstances should a woman consider divorce	0,553		
Domestic violence is a private matter should not be publically discussed.	0,636		
Factor 2: Positiveviews		20,134	2,215
Women can vote for different political parties than their husbands	0,447		
Women should be free to choose where and how to spend the money she earns	0,660		
Women should decide when and how many kids they would like to have	0,802		
Women should be free to choose their fashion styles	0,775		

The "Negative Views" sub-dimension explains 28.703% of the total variance while the "Positive Views" sub-dimension explains 20.134% of it. "Positive Views" and "Negative Views" sub dimensions together explain 48.837% of the total variance. A reliability analysis was applied and it revealed that "Negative Views" sub-dimension which included 7 items was very reliable ($\alpha=0.797$) and the "Positive Views" sub-dimension including 4 items was reliable ($\alpha=0.670$). Negative Views sub-dimension has an average of 2, 95 with a standard deviation of 0,589. Positive Views sub-dimension has an average of 1, 54 with a standard deviation of 0,498.

Results

Background information about the participants

Socio Economic Status: Participants age average varied between four groups: 18-27 (24.9%); 28-37 (25.7%); 38-47 (24.9%); and over 48 (24.5%). A 40.2% of the participants reported no independent income. 10.1% reported an income of 1-700TL; 28.8% reported an income of 701-1500 TL; 20.9% reported an income over 1500TL. When compared to household incomes, 3.4% of the participants come from households with incomes 750 TL and less; 23.1% from households with incomes 751-1500 TL; and 35.5% from households with 1501-2500TL; and 38% from households with 2500TL and above.

Education: The majority of participants had high school(11 years) diplomas(32.3%), which was followed respectively by 22.4% university graduates(15 years), 17.7% elementary school graduates(5 years), 11.2% middle school graduates(8years) and 8.9% Associate degree(13years)and 3.7% with graduate degrees (17 years). Another 3.8% of participants had not formal schooling.

Employment: 36.2% of participants had never worked outside the home. While 41.1% had a full time job, 7.1% had a part time employment. Of the remaining group, 6.6% had reported to have just left an employment, 6% was retired and 3.1% has been looking for a job. Of those who had reported to have been unemployed (n=80) 26% has been without a job for less than 8 months, 33.8% had been unemployed for 9-24 months; 15.6% had been unemployed for 25-60 months, and 24.7% had been unemployed for more than 60 months.

Among those without a job (n=80) 20.7% noted that they had been fired, 24.7% reported that they had to leave their jobs to take care of their kids; 19.5% noted that their husbands asked that they leave their jobs, 15.6% needed to take care of household needs and 19.5% noted they no longer wanted to work. Of the participants, 84.5% were from nuclear families, 10.5 % had extended families, while 5% had single parent households. 32.9% of the participants had no kids, 20.9% had one child, 25.6% had two, 13.9% had 3 kids and 7.2% had 4 and more kids.

Civic Engagement: 95.2% of the participants had held no membership to any civic organizations working on women's issues. This study found however a statistically significant relationship between education and civic engagement, with women who have bachelor degrees are more likely to become members on organizations working on women's issues ($p < 0,001$).

Political Awareness: more than half of the participants (54.8%) were not aware of the newly established Ministry of Family and Social Policies. A 70.9% of participants did not know that there existed a new institute on Women's status that was reporting to the ministry. 53.7% of the participants did not know anything about the positive gender discrimination policies. A whopping 75.9% of participants agree that women are not represented equally in the media.

Educational levels emerge as statistically significant drivers for all the relationship noted above. Women with BA degrees have been found statistically significantly more aware of the new ministry, new institute, as well as the new policies such as positive gender discrimination ($p < 0,001$). Women with BA degrees also found an equal representation of women in the media and argue that women have equal voice ($p < 0,001$). The most significant concern that majority of the participants had was domestic violence.

After domestic violence ranked inconsiderate spouse and lack of employment opportunities respectively. 50% of the participants disagreed with the statement that women's rights under this current government had experienced progress. Of those who disagreed, 30% disagreed, while 20% strongly disagreed. Similarly more than half of the participants, 53.4%, disagreed strongly with the government's recommendation that every woman should have at least three kids.

Women's Views on Traditional Gender Roles

Women's views on traditional gender roles were analyzed from a gender equality perspective regarding age; the one-way ANOVA made on these views showed that both Positive and Negative Views sub-dimensions had a statistically significant correlation between "age" variable ($p < 0.01$). The percentage of younger women (18-27 years age) have significantly more negative views on gender equality compared to women between 38-47 and 48 and above ($p < 0.01$) The rate of women between 38-47 with positive views on gender equality is higher than those between 18-27 and 28-37; moreover the rate of women above 48 having positive views on gender equality is higher than those between 18-27 ($p < 0.01$) (See Table 2 below)

2. Women's Views on Gender Equality and Gendered Roles According to Age Groups (ANOVA)

Lower dimension	Age	N	Average	Standard Deviation	F	p	Difference
Negative Views	18-27 Yearsold	303	3,08	0,560	12,032	0,000**	1-3,4 4-2,3
	28-37 YearsOld	313	3,00	0,557			
	38-47 YearsOld	303	2,93	0,571			
	48 years old and above	299	2,80	0,635			
Positive Views	18-27 Yearsold	303	1,47	0,493	6,400	0,000**	3-1,2 1-4
	28-37 YearsOld	313	1,51	0,488			
	38-47 YearsOld	303	1,62	0,504			
	48 Years old and above	299	1,60	0,496			

***: $p < 0, 05$ **: $p < 0, 01$**

Regarding the educational statuses; women with lower educational attainment (elementary school) have significantly less negative views on gender equality compared to those with higher education (middle and high school as well as those with associate degrees, BA master's and doctoral degrees).

Similarly, those with middle school education have significantly less negative views compared to those with high school and above education levels, while those with high school degrees have significantly less negative views than those who have BAs and above. Women with associate degrees have significantly less negative views than those with BAs and above. The one-way ANOVA also showed that there was a significant correlation between Negative Views sub-dimension and educational statuses ($p < 0,01$) (Table 3).

3. Variance of Women’s Views on Gender Equality based on their education levels (ANOVA)

Alt Boyut	Educational Levels	N	Average	Standard Deviation	F	p	Difference
Negative Views	No Education	46	2,18	0,470	85,50	0,000 **	1- 2,3,4,5,6,7 2-3,4,5,6,7 3-4,5,6,7 4-6,7 5-6,7
	Elementary School (5years)	215	2,53	0,521			
	Middle School (8years)	136	2,65	0,497			
	High School (11year)	394	3,04	0,526			
	Associate degree (13years)	109	3,08	0,486			
	Bachelor Degree (15years)	273	3,31	0,442			
	Graduate Degree (17+years)	45	3,35	0,408			
Positive Views	No Education	46	1,88	0,493	27,10	0,000 **	1-3,4,5,6,7 2-3,4,5,6,7 3-4,5,6,7 4-6
	Elementary School (5years)	215	1,81	0,505			
	Middle School (8years)	136	1,67	0,467			
	High School (11years)	394	1,50	0,481			
	Associate degree (13years)	109	1,43	0,456			
	Bachelor Degree (15years)	273	1,35	0,412			
	Graduate Degree (17+years)	45	1,41	0,524			

*: $p < 0,05$ **: $p < 0,01$

Women’s Awareness of Existing Policies towards Gender Equality

Of the women surveyed, a clear majority, 90.3% were aware of the current changes in the divorce laws dictating “men and women will equally share the wealth accumulated during marriage”. A 83.3% of participants were equally aware that women who have been married through religious ceremonies would have equal legal rights is in fact not true. Such high levels of awareness demonstrated that women are more sensitive to legal changes towards gender equality. However, they (41.6%) have not been equally aware of the legal changes making women dependant on their husbands or their fathers for access to free healthcare (Table 4).

4. Women’s Views on Existing Gender Equality Laws and Regulations

Expressions	Correct		Wrong		I do not know	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
At divorce wife gets half of accumulated wealth during marriage	1100	90,3	36	3,0	82	6,7
There is no income discrimination in Turkey	269	22,1	796	65,4	153	12,6
Girls can get married legally at age 13 with their parents’ consent	97	8,0	993	81,5	128	10,5
The religious marriage guarantees women legal rights	100	8,2	1014	83,3	104	8,5
Women and men are equal under law	900	73,9	242	19,9	76	6,2
Honor crimes are penalized more lightly compared to other murders	269	22,1	506	41,5	443	36,4
With the new social security legislation women’s access to free healthcare has been made dependent on their husbands and fathers	495	40,6	216	17,7	507	41,6

Conclusions

A very small group of the participants, 4.8%, has ever joined a civil society organization that focuses on women’s rights. More than half of the participants, 54.8% was not informed of the newly minted Ministry of Family and Social Policies, a further 70.9% of participants did not know that there existed a new institute on Women’s Status, and 53.7% did not know of the positive gender discrimination. Of all the participants 75.9% did not agree that women were represented equally in the media not that they have equal voice.

Women in different age groups had statistically significantly different views on gender roles. As women’s educational attainment increase they have less positive views on gender roles for women and men ($P < 0.001$). A solid majority of participants, 90.3%, was aware of the legal changes that at divorce gave women equal share of wealth accumulated during marriage.

In terms of difficulties women face, participants ranked domestic violence, inconsiderate spouses, and lack of employment opportunities respectively as most important. While half of the participants, 50%, did not agree with the statement that during the current government women experienced progress in gender equality, with 30% those did not agree, the remaining 20% disagreed strongly. More than half of the women surveyed, 53.4%, disagreed with the statement that every women should have at least 3 kids.

According to these results, it is clear that the government's existing efforts in eliminating gender inequalities and breaking away from gendered stereotypes have not been fully effective. To those ends this study recommends: Instead of short term projects, long term and strategically planned policies need to be developed. Along with NGO, organizations in the public and private sector need to participate in the design and implementation of a wholesome and a coordinated policy effort towards gender equality. It needs to be understood clearly that for a country to achieve sustainable development, women's labor market participation needs to be encouraged and ensured. The gradual yet steady decline in Turkish women's labor market participation demonstrates a lack of systematic government and civil society effort and notes the need to speed up this process.

With further regulations equal opportunities for women need to be created in employment. Policies need to focus on opening new employment fields equally to women, and the government needs to support such efforts. Traditional gender roles and stereotypes need that impede women's employment opportunities need to be disengaged with studies and research as such. A long term systematic advocacy campaign to inform and engage the public need to accompany other activities such as meetings and seminars on gender equality.

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