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**WOMEN'S INCOME GENERATING
ACTIVITIES IN TURKEY**

**A Thesis
By**

NIHAN KAYAARDI

**Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Texas-Pan American
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

MASTER OF SCIENCE

August 2000

Major Subject: Sociology

Copyright

By

**Nihan Kayaardi
2000**

**WOMEN'S INCOME GENERATING
ACTIVITIES IN TURKEY**

**A Thesis
By
NIHAN KAYAARDI**

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Home working has recently reemerged in both less-developed and developed countries. It is observed in both unskilled and highly skilled work. In general, there are no estimates of the number of women who bring work into their homes. Home working is part of the informal economy that is disguised and shadowed in the economy. Most of this type of employment is hidden in official statistics. In Turkey, for example the female informal labor force is about 68 % (Kumbetoglu, 1993). Most of the work done by the women is piecework, and their earnings depend on the piece-rate.

This thesis utilizes existing secondary sources in attempting to explain the participation of Turkish women in the informal economy. It is suggested that through continuous exposure to paid work, women's consciousness will gradually increase and challenge traditional understandings of the subordination concept.

DEDICATION

Aileme ve Diana'ya.....

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INTRODUCTION

Interest in the informal economy has increased since the 1970's. Since that time, a larger and more theoretically complex literature focusing on the origins, dynamics and persistence of the informal economy has developed.

The informal economy, however, has emerged in diverse social and economic contexts within many societies. Different countries face economic problems in different ways depending upon emerging economic phenomena. Studies of the informal economy* throughout the world, though, address a common set of ideas. Initial formulations of the informal sector have emphasized its connection to the marginality of the urban poor, their economic activities, and their precarious location within the larger economy.

In this thesis I will present and discuss the role played by women in the Turkish informal economy. First, this thesis will review the theoretical construction that delineates the informal economy and the phenomenon of women's labor within the informal economy. Second, it will explore how the state-economy and culture impact upon women's economic behavior in Turkey. Before proceeding in this direction, however, it is necessary to understand Turkey's state policy. Specifically, how the state itself shaped the economy, subsequently giving rise to informal activities. For instance, a tremendous change has occurred in the Turkish economic sphere since the 1970's,

* The Term "informal economy" includes two areas of phenomena: (1) home based economy: The word "Work" is economic activity which includes all production and processing of primary products whether for the market, for barter or for one's personal consumption" from this point of view, home based work should not be confused with unpaid housework, domestic responsibilities, or unpaid production.; (2) underground, hidden economy: production wholly or partly for sale liable to declaration for tax or control purposes, wholly or partly hidden (Bagnasco, 1990).

brought about by the Turgut Ozal* government's free-market policies. The role women play in the Turkish family has not only been central to maintaining the cultural structure, but has also been critical to the development and expansion of a home-based economy. Lastly, this thesis evaluates the rationalization, following Weber, of home-based marginality in urban Turkey. Women's participation in the informal economy has typically been viewed as women taking a passive role, as being the recipients of change and the victims of forces they do not generate or control. Sometimes, women's economic behavior in society results from a strategy of their own. Generally speaking, and within the Weberian perspective, the informal economy may provide the best "rational" alternative to Turkish women whose precarious financial condition force them to engage in the economy.

Glaser et al. (1967: 3) suggest that the interconnected aims of sociological theory are: "(1) to enable prediction and explanation of behavior; (2) to be usable in practical applications; (3) to provide a perspective on behavior; and (4) to guide and provide a style for research on particular areas of behavior." When a theory suits the research problem, then it might be logical to interpret the behavior under the study using the theory. The theoretical background of the present research problem derives from Weber's view of rational action which is employed to explain women's participation in the informal economy.

* Turkey's Prime Minister during the 1980s.

Home working has recently reemerged in both less-developed and developed countries, and it includes both unskilled and highly skilled work. Although many women bring work into their homes, it is unknown exactly how many women do this. Home working is part of the informal economy that is disguised and shadowed by the larger economy. Most of this type of employment is hidden in official statistics. In Turkey, for example, the female informal labor force is about 68 % (Kumbetoglu, 1993). Most of the work done by women is piecework, and their earnings depend on the piece-rate (White, 1992: 121).

Traditionally women's economic positions within the family were considered of less importance than men's economic positions. In Traditional Turkish culture and society, women's social identity is primarily derived from the familial positions of wife, mother or daughter. On the other hand, men's economic roles have always been strongly associated with productive activities, especially when they have been insufficient or nonviable because of economic crisis. Women's roles, meanwhile, have been strongly associated with household reproduction. Women have been conventionally associated with domestic labor. Vincent (1998:129), for example, while trying to problematize the domestic situation, agrees that "domestic labor is overwhelmingly women's work." Further, not only is the actual work of cleaning, cooking, and providing clothing, and so on, carried out by women, in many cases all women's work becomes regarded as domestic no matter what they do. Thus, Narotzky (Vincent, 1998) notes, in Spain, women's participation in the informal sector is seen as part of their household responsibility.

The formal and informal sectors are linked by relations of interdependency. White (1992) notes that small firms have direct contact with home workers, something also true of large firms in urban Turkey. Decentralization of production, of which subcontracting is a part, has continued as a global strategy for controlling profitability for small or large firms.

This study primarily employs analysis of available secondary data. Secondary data analysis involves documented data or data gathered or authored by another person. This methodology has been chosen because the researcher is writing from outside the field. Secondary data analysis relies on data from available data archives (survey results, codebooks, etc.) (Bailey, 1994). This thesis relies on data provided through The Turkish Statistical Institute (SIS) 1955, 1990 and 1994 reports, the World Bank Country Study 1991 (Turkey: Women in Development) and the TUSIAD (Turkish Industries and Businessmen Association) report on Istanbul 1991. It also draws heavily from three separate but related studies: Cinar's (1989) pioneer work on homework in Turkey (Bursa and Istanbul), and White's (1992) and Kumbetoglu's (1992) research on women's labor in the marginal economy of Istanbul. The use of secondary data, which have been conducted and prepared by other researchers, may raise questions of construct validity in the data analysis. Because secondary data include the ideas and biases of the original authors, data can only be seen through their interpretation. Although this can be a problem, the use of secondary data analysis is often necessary when the subject matter is logistically impossible to reach, as in this study. The researcher is not always in a position to personally collect data.

The household, social relations within the family, and women's work in Turkey have challenged our traditional understanding of the subordination concept. Working in the house and participating in the marginal economy can change gender relations within the household. Paid work can lead to changes in women's consciousness. .

CHAPTER I

CONCEPTUAL THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

A society exhibits a broad institutional structure. A complex industrial society, for example, simultaneously exhibits a general social organization consisting of institutional systems and institutionalized groups. The various kinds of structures that may be found in a group are interrelated aspects of a larger whole, and are not separable in the sense that any one of them may be removed from the others (Quinn, 1963). Social reality has its own characteristics, and this reality requires analysis on its own terms. The concept of structure implies that a larger thing is made up of smaller parts that are related to one another: “X” is thus influenced by “Y”, “Z” and “Y” by “Z”, and so on. Explanation of social issues by using multi- dimensional factors provides for a better understanding of social institutions. This study’s theoretical perspective will be examined later in the paper. Women’s involvement in the informal economy in Turkey will be explained first by taking into account Turkish social structure and culture. Below, I provide a synopsis of the theoretical development of the thesis. I begin by presenting the conceptual model that graphically illustrates my attempt to integrate the various components of Turkish culture and social structure as each affects women’s participation in the informal economy.

The thrust of this thesis lies in integrating existing official data, government and agency reports, and social science findings in analyzing women's participation in the Turkish informal economy. To this end, I have developed a conceptual model that offers a graphic representation of the constructs that guide the analysis of the data to be presented here. It is understood that there are many exogenous variables that unquestionably impact women's participation in the informal economy. However, as a heuristic device, I have formulated the graphic representation to give the reader a clearer understanding of those concepts and specific variables addressed in the thesis. Specifically, as noted on the model, I have bolded the linkages between the variables to indicate those that will be addressed here and for which we present data for analysis. The following outline presents an overview of the model that follows.

MODEL

CONCEPTUAL OUTLINE

Major Constructs Utilized in the Model

- I- CULTURE**
 - A) Evaluative and Normative Orientation**
 - 1-Gender Construction: Cultural ascription of characteristics to members of each sex.**
 - 2-Religion: A system of beliefs and rituals with reference to the sacred which binds people together into social groups.**
- II- SOCIAL STRUCTURE**
 - A) Demographic changes**
 - 1-Fertility**
 - 2-Migration: Movement from rural areas to Istanbul.**
 - B) Urbanization: Orientation of living around the demands of urban life.**
 - C) Economy: Larger system of supply, demand and production.**
 - 1-Formal**
 - 2-Informal: Economic activities occurring at the margins of formal economic activities.**
 - D) Politics, policies: The relational effects of national policy initiatives.**

WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

Engels (1975) sought the origins of the position of women in society and observed the division of labor by sex as determined by women's role in child rearing and the separation of social from domestic production.

Most societies have generally assigned to women two other fundamental aspects of the reproduction of the labor force, specifically, child-care and the set of activities associated with daily family support. This is a consequence of the control exercised over women's reproductive activities, which reduces their mobility and makes the household their primary area of concentration.

Women's employment decisions are often tied to family considerations, and some women look for self-employment to avail themselves of flexible work hours. Having children, particularly young children, strongly impacts women's tendency to remain home. Likewise, Boden (1999) states that women with children under the age of six are more likely to be self-employed than women with older children.

Scholars working closely with women in the informal sector argue that the informal sector is even larger than official statistics lead one to believe. If the magnitude of women's invisible paid work, particularly home-based profitable work, were to be fully known, both the share of women and the share of informal workers in the work force would increase (Chen, Sebstad and O'Connel, 1999: 603).

Some sub-sectors of the informal sector are not governed by social ties and relationships, as per the characterization of the informal sector in the World Development Report (WD 1995) on labor, but by direct ties to the formal sector. That is, some sub-sectors of the informal sector have direct production, trade or service links to the formal sector. Further, homework does not emerge simply because women allegedly prefer working at home -- this is known as housewife theory-- but also because employers prefer to subcontract work to home workers as a cost-reducing strategy (Chen, et al. 1999).

Home-based production and household labor loom dramatically in analyses of the informal economy. The neglect of women's work, especially in early research on the informal sector, has resulted from development policies often based on census data that underestimate women's work and potential labor demand. Women's income-earning activities are often an extension of their household work. This is the case with tasks that are typically considered female rather than male work. Examples of sex-typed jobs include embroidery, hand-weaving, sewing, etc.

The kind of relation found between homework and gender introduces home-based activities. Homework represents labor intensive production that employs either very simple tools or none at all. It is unskilled industrial work; the required tasks are extremely simple and repetitive, and this type of work is usually unstable, with little security. Most domestic pieceworkers are women.

Women prefer participation in the informal economy because many have little or no education, and this prevents them from finding factory work. Factories usually require a minimum level of literacy, and domestic work is considered women's primary responsibility. In the Beneria and Roldan (1987: 65) study of Mexico's informal economy, illiterate women often mentioned their inability to find factory work because factories require a minimum level of literacy. More than 15% of women mentioned their lack of alternatives as a reason for concentrating on homework.

Homework involves a mixed organization of production in which the workshop or factory gives the materials to the worker who is paid (or will be paid) a piece wage for the work. Women have the ability to control their own pace and schedule and are limited only by their household responsibilities (Beneria and Roldan, 1987).

Beneria and Roldan (1987) demonstrate in their study, *Mexico*, the characteristics of homework activities: in some cases the home-workers (1) own the means of production, (2) have control over the labor process, (3) have no control over the product and no direct connection with the market, (4) experience profit by piece wage. From this point of view, homework is an essential part of the overall processes of production even if involving mixed forms of production. Beneria and Roldan (1987) mention a higher than average earning for workers in the informal sector than for their counterparts in the formal sector.

Gender studies focus on women as a source of cheap labor, as individuals paid lower wages for homework than wages paid in formal employment. These studies concentrate on the general character of the labor process rather than investigating gender-specific relations within the process (Castells and Portes, 1989).

INFORMAL ECONOMY

During the 1970s economic growth and employment generation strategies were designed by development planners in Third World countries (Felldman, 1991). These strategies had an impact on urban migration, which, in turn resulted in higher underemployment and unemployment in Third World cities. For instance, in Turkey in 1955, only 29% of the population lived in cities, but by 1990 this number jumped to 59% (WBR, 1991). After 1980, approximately 250,000-300,000 people were migrating every year to Istanbul, Turkey's largest city (White, 1992).

Since the early 1980s, developing countries have experienced contrasting trends in the growth of modern or formal sector employment. Some countries have experienced moderate growth, for example, the vast majority of the labor force in South Asia continues in agriculture and the informal sector; while others such as Turkey have experienced sharp increases in industrial employment. In Asian countries, before the recent economic crisis a significant percentage of women workers were in non-wage employment. For instance, 43% of women workers in South Korea and 79% of women in Indonesia were non-wage workers (World Bank, 1995). However, some developed or industrialized countries have experienced a recent decline in formal wage employment, which has been associated with a rise in informal employment. Shifts from formal into informal employment are a common characteristic of many developing economies (Chen et al. 1999).

Unofficial surveys and micro studies that include broader measures of employment (these include home based workers) suggest that the share of the workers in informal employment are even higher. In sum, the developing world faces a major challenge of creating jobs within the modern formal sector as well as promoting opportunities within the informal sector (traditional) in urban areas.

Why does the informal sector persist in developing countries? The following theories may help to answer this question:

1. Lack of growth theory: The assumption that the share of the work force in modern or formal sector employment increases as GDP per workers increases (WB 1995).
2. Jobless Growth Theory: Capital-intensive technology, in addition to recent economic policies, privatization, deregulation, and globalization, have led to a decrease in the number of formal sector jobs or to the informalization of certain formal sector jobs.
3. Growth from below Theory: Underlying this explanation is the recognition that small-scale enterprises in the informal sector are growing faster than large- scale firms are in the modern sector.
4. The period of adjustment Theory: In almost all economies undergoing adjustment, there are marked shifts from formal to informal employment. (These theories are all closely linked).

Dissatisfaction with the analysis of the economies of developing countries in terms of two separate economic sectors-traditional/modern, subsistence agrarian/capitalist industrial (or whichever dualist terms are used) – led to attempt to specify the inter-connections between the two sectors. This was found to lie in the functional relationship of the informal sector to the capitalist or formal sector. The structural linkage between the two sectors, permitting a higher rate of capital accumulation, is seen as the reason the informal sector is expanding in peripheral or dependent Third World economies (Moser and Young, 1981).

According to Standing (1977), the informal economy was not regulated by capital: activities were survival oriented, and capitalist accumulation was rare. Later on, Portes (1985) pointed at low-wages, labor intensive production, and cheap goods as characteristic elements of the informal economy.

What does the term “home-based worker” mean? The terminology around home-based work is confusing. The word “Work” according to ILO (International Labor Office) is “economic activity includes all production and processing of primary products whether for the market, for barter or for your own consumption” (Thinker, 1987: 6). According to this view, home based work should not be confused with unpaid housework, domestic responsibilities, or unpaid production. In regard to profitability, home-based work gives people the ability to earn a living when formal sector work is not available. It also gives people the freedom to work at their own pace using skills they already know. The informal (home based) economy can not be examined in isolation from the rest of the economy. Both the informal and formal economies are linked together. The following chapter will discuss the Turkish economy in specific time periods and how culture affects gender identity.

CHAPTER II

THE TURKISH ECONOMY

In recent years, the dominant theme in development economics has been the liberalization programs undertaken by a number of developing countries. Turkey employed import- substituting industries over agricultural industries between 1950 and 1979. In the 1980's Turkey undertook one such program which has been the object of numerous investigations and analyzes since its inception.

In the following pages, I will discuss the economic history of Turkey. This discussion will aid in the understanding of the presence of marginal activities, such as home based work, which affects the economy of Turkey.

1950-1959 Period

The 1950s constitute an important period in the economic history of Turkey. In 1950, the first multi-party elections were held in Turkey, and the Democratic Party (DP- Demokrat Parti-) gained victory on May 14, 1950. During the 1960's under the leadership of Celal Bayar and Adnan Menderes, the party opposed "statism", and encouraged a liberal economic policy (Aktan, 1997). Such a policy led to the decline of statism in the 1970s, which had ruled public policy in Turkey from the beginning of the declaration of the Republic in 1923.

1960-1980 Period Planned Years

Turkey protected import-substituting industries over exports and industry over agriculture during the three decades encompassing 1950-79. During this period, Turkey followed an inward-oriented development strategy.

Until the mid-1960s Turkey was engaged in replacing the imports of non-stable consumer goods by domestic production. By the mid-1960's Turkey was able to satisfy the domestic demand for those commodities. At that time, Turkey had a choice of two strategies: it could start exporting manufactured goods, or it could move on to the second stage of import substitution. Turkey chose the latter strategy and replaced the importation of intermediate goods and consumer durables with domestic production. But the characteristics of these commodities differed from those replaced during the first stage: They were highly capital intensive. Correspondingly, high protection of these industries was required. High protection was achieved through taxes, quotas, and over-valued exchange rates. As a result, the maintenance of the pace of growth became more and more costly (Togan, 1996).

From the beginning of 1960 until the end of the 1970s Turkey followed a planned economic policy. A first Five Years Development Plan was drawn up on the principle that: "The activities of the government will be planned to achieve a high economic growth and a balanced economic development"(Togan, 1996: 1).

In the early 1980s, Turkey started to pursue an export-oriented growth strategy centered on manufactured exports. During the mid 1980s, Turkey moved from an inward-oriented statist strategy to an outward-oriented free market economy.

Major Free Market Policies Post-1980 Era

The Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi), succeeded in winning the November 6, 1983 general election. The newly elected party announced that the government would take necessary steps to reduce the size and the functions of the public sector and to increase the activities of the private sector in the national economy. Turkey adopted the Stabilization and Structural Adjustment Program and began to implement liberal economic policies (privatization, deregulation, free foreign exchange, free trade, free trade zones, etc.) to strengthen its free market economy.

Between 1980 and 1990, the total amount of merchandise exported quadrupled and the export value of \$ 2,910,000 in 1980 reached \$ 12,959,300 by 1990. During this period, the average annual growth rate for exports reached 17% ratio of exports to GNP was only 5% in 1980, but reached 15.6% in 1985 and quickly rose to 16 % by the second half of the decade (Taskin and Yeldan, 1996: 156).

Since 1980, this export boom has proven the most important factor in the recovery of the Turkish economy. In addition to the increase in absolute levels of exports, there were structural changes. In the 1980's 57.4% of the total exports were agricultural goods and only 35.9% were industrial goods, but by end of the decade the percentages changed in favor of industrial goods (Taskin and Yeldan, 1996:156).

The success of Turkey's new outward-oriented growth policy was attributed to the spectacular increase in its exports and significant changes in the composition of Turkish exports during the 1980-90 period. By the end of the period, the share of

industrial goods had reached 79.4 % of the total exports, whereas only 18% of total exports were agricultural goods. Turkey moved from being mainly an agricultural goods exporter to an industrial goods exporter (SIS, 1992).

After 1980, such changes in the strategy market-oriented export-led growth for economic development increasingly emphasized the importance of exports, specifically manufactured exports. Accordingly, a series of export-promotion programs were put into effect during the period.

There have been enormous differences in the growth rates of sectoral exports within the manufacturing industry. Textiles, the traditional manufactured export of Turkey, not just maintained its importance, but dramatically increased. Whereas in 1980, 14.5 % of the total exports were textile products, by 1990, 39.5 % of the total exports were from this industry. Textile products became the major Turkish export item, with their value exceeding that of total agricultural product exports by a factor of two.

The main objective of the new development strategy was industrialization through export growth. Resources were reallocated from the agricultural sector to industry and the importance of industrial goods exports increased. Textile products, with 39.5 % of total manufactured exports, continued to be the major export item.

All in all, the export-led growth strategy attained an important transformation in the composition of Turkey's exports and promoted resource reallocation from the agricultural sector to industrial sectors.

The most visible fact is that in all sectors --to include such labor-intensive sectors as textiles, food processing and basic machinery, and capital-intensive sectors such as chemicals and basic metals-- labor per unit of value added declined throughout the

period. Part of this decline can be attributed to labor productivity increase. Another explanation is that the sectors had both excess capacity and that the labor employed was not fully utilized. Both the sectoral diversification created in the export sectors towards capital intensive production and the decline in labor per value added presented a pessimistic picture in terms of the employment creation effects of export expansion. I now turn to an analysis of the sectoral implications of export expansion in order to provide the necessary linkages between the informal economic sector on the one hand, and exports, employment, capital accumulation and distribution on the other.

After the import-substitution phase in the 1970's the Turkish economy was faced with large debt burdens. Within the new economic model of the 1980's the industry sought to reorganize for export production by reducing labor costs. This was accomplished by using subcontracting, a system of small *ateliers* (sweatshops), and by piecework, usually done by women. Large-scale unemployment and reductions in real wages led to rapid impoverishment in Turkey. As their husbands' incomes kept decreasing, low-income working-class women were increasingly pressured to generate income.

WOMEN IN TURKEY

Women's traditional roles changed slowly due to Turkey's planned developmental processes. Participation in the labor force has increased women's status and power in relation to men's contributing to egalitarianism in the family (Cagatay and Soysal, 1988).

Among the Islamic countries in the Middle East, Turkey was the first to remove almost all-legal barriers against women. The social position of women in Turkey initially changed in the 1920s and early 1930s during the Kemalist reforms. The Kemalist reforms were not intended to liberate women. Instead of promoting the development of female consciousness and female identity, they strove to equip Turkish women with the education and finer skills that would improve their contribution to the republican patriarchy as better wives and mothers (Cagatay and Soysal, 1988).

These reforms banned polygamy and recognized the nuclear family as an institution to be protected by law. Although the general principles and articles of the law treated the husband and wife as legal equals, the division of labor in the family and the rights and responsibilities of each spouse, definitely stated in the law, presented a highly non-egalitarian picture. The article establishing male dominance in marriage can be summarized as follows:

Man is the head of the union of marriage. The right and responsibility of deciding place of residence belongs to the husband. It is also the husband's responsibility to provide for his wife and children. The husband represents the union of marriage. Although the wife has some representative rights, they are limited to legal representation in matters that deal with providing "the continuous needs of the household ". The wife can take a job or engage in a craft only upon the "explicit or implicit permission" of the husband. The husband, on the other hand, can require his wife to contribute to the family budget to "a reasonable extent". Upon marriage, the wife has to use the husband's family name. The wife is held responsible for taking care of the house (Article 153/II). However, she is never

given the premier role and, in fact, as pronounced in Article 153/II, “to the extent that she can, the wife serves as the assistant and consultant of her husband to pursue the happiness of the family” (Arat, Z 1994: 59).

Housework and family responsibilities were equally binding on all women. Even the women of the civil service who constituted a privileged segment during the early days of the Republic were not spared from such responsibilities. They worked long work hours, and were stressed out by housework, child-care, patching and sewing. These women were unable to change the relations within the family, despite their role and status in the state, and were forced to accept the double-shift workday imposed on them by work and gender norms. In order to justify their oppression to themselves and to others, they transmitted the legitimation of the double shift mentality to their daughters. The next generation of civil servant women who had never been actually equal or free to choose would say, “if there were no economic necessities, I would like to stay home, and be the woman of my house” (Tekeli, 1988: 49).

Article 153 was later modified by the succeeding government. However it was easier to change the law than to replace embedded cultural habits. From the 1950's, on increasing numbers (54.1 %) of urban women found employment outside the home, not only in the classroom, but also in factories, commercial establishments, offices, and in government (SIS, 1992).

Traditional Turkish culture exercises a strong influence on the Turkish family which remains very traditional in character and unquestionably accepts that women's roles are limited to those of mothers and wives. Women, nonetheless, have been able to

change their traditional position and attain positions in society in which they can work for the betterment of their families. Women's involvement in the economy has been slow to catch on, though it still meets with resistance, at times.

Competition for formal urban jobs is likely to become more intense in the future since the current female participation is relatively low. Even though the participation of Turkish women in the formal labor market remains extraordinarily low, with Kazgan (1982) reporting that women comprise only 11% of the urban labor force, competition for formal urban jobs has increased with rapid urbanization. As more men and middle class women enter the urban labor market, the *gecekondu** (squatter-house) women have either withdrawn from the labor force or entered unspecialized branches of the urban sector. However, as suggested later, this exodus may be only temporary.

The heaviest concentration of women in Turkey's labor force was found in agriculture up until the 1960s, then it changed to light manufacturing industry, tobacco, textile, apparel, food, beverages, the packing operation of chemicals, and certain subdivisions of the service industries. The wages of women, working in industrial producing sectors are affected by Turkey's major export products in the world market. From 1955 to 1974, the wages of female employees have varied between two-thirds to four-fifths of that of male employee (Kazgan, 1982). In addition, only about 9% of the workers covered by social security are women. Female minors are often employed

* After 1983 under Ozal government, "construction pardons" were issued by the government, granting legal standing to certain houses built in illegally (either without deed to the land, or without a construction permit) before that date. These pardons alternated with bulldozer demolition or other, usually newer gecekondu homes. In the original use of term, gecekondu houses are built on public land (White, 1992: 130).

secretly and escape statistical records altogether. The concentration of working women in the 25 and under age group suggests that it is mainly single women who enter and then leave the work force upon marriage (Kandiyoti, 1988).

In Kandiyoti's 1977 migrant study, she found that among migrant couples in Istanbul only 2% of wives were engaged in any form of employment. Factors that strengthen these trends include relatively early marriage, a high proportion of pre-school children in the home, inadequate support from female kin, and, cultural norms that dictate that women should stay home and take care of children (Kandiyoti, 1977).

However, despite cultural norms that urge wives to stay at home and that of the unattractiveness of the jobs available to lower-class women, more and more married women are joining -- and will have to join-- the urban work force just to meet the costs of urban living (Kandiyoti, 1977). Thus withdrawal of *gecekond* women, as already noted especially married women, from the urban labor market may be only a temporary phenomenon. As more of these women enter the labor force even if these jobs are unorganized, low paying, and unskilled their bargain power at home will increase. In periods of economic depression, the response of low-income households to economic pressure may be greater reliance on the supplementary earnings of secondary workers, namely, women.

In general Turkish women marry between the ages of eighteen and twenty, giving birth to their first child on the average at age twenty two, with a reproductive cycle of about ten to fifteen years. Both in terms of their labor force participation and their social lives, these women exhibit distinct patterns.

According to Kandiyoti (1977) Turkish women define their roles in predominantly domestic terms. She found that 32.9% of women defined the successful woman in exclusively domestic terms as a “ good mother and wife”. Twenty three percent of women reported the importance of being socially active and useful to the community along with being an accomplished housewife; 25.6% believed that the ability to combine a career with household duties was a criterion of success. Finally, 12, 2% stressed being self-sufficient and self-fulfilled persons as the ultimate goal. Thus, although women have been able to retain their fundamental role as wives and mothers in the household, they have also developed new roles as active economic agents while participating in the informal economy. They complement the husband’s legitimate role as provider, since they are viewed as being interested in contributing to the family budget, rather than in a career.

Most women tend to see the housewife / mother role as their primary vocation in life with paid work seldom becoming a “ master status”. This ideological and, in the final analysis, psychological internationalization or “ false consciousness”, informally sanctions deviations from the accepted sex roles standards (Scanzoni, 1972).

In the case of low-income urban women, the evidence indicates that they retreat into domesticity to the extent that economic conditions allow. The vicious circle of lower education, low status job opportunities, gives preference to the home. When they enter the labor force, they often consider their work temporary, sometimes shameful, appropriate only to help their families through difficult times. For poorer urban women,

economic slumps, with high unemployment and falling wages, increase the pressure on their families and require their increased involvement either in unpaid family labor in the petty production and distribution sectors or in low wage employment, on a more or less permanent basis.

Job opportunities may be slim and work conditions poor, involvement in the informal economy gives women the opportunity to participate in the labor force. This is a resource that increases women's status and power in relation to men, and hence gradually contributes towards greater egalitarianism in the family.

In the following chapter, I will attempt to utilize Weber's economic theory to explain the informal economy and will discuss the connection between Weber's concept of rational action and women's income-generating activities. I will also include a description of the research procedures.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

The relationship between the formal and informal economy is one of increasing interdependence. The continuing crisis of the 1980s has made prominent the informal sector in the literature on developing countries. But, as Portes (1985) points out, “ while the informal sector is now well studied from an empirical / historical point of view, the theoretical literature is sparse.” (Portes, 1985: 204).

In this chapter I will discuss how the informal economy developed under present economic conditions. In doing so, I rely on a Weberian approach to explain informality. In the first place, economic dynamics such as market place struggles among groups, formally free labor, costs, etc. bring about informality. Second, the informal economy is beneficial to both large-scale firms and individual economic actors.

To begin with, Weber’s definition of the term “economy” is usually used in its compound sense, to mean a process for supplying material means through economic action, and the functional formulation of the economy (Ritzer, 1992). From this fundamental idea, that encompasses the total economic process, two basic measures are developed. One is, that the provision of human needs- the aim of economic activity- is

carried out within the framework of private enterprise and its calculable chances of gain, that is, within a profit framework. The other is that the existence of those whose needs are to be satisfied depends on the profit opportunities of the capitalist enterprise (Weber, 1964).

Sociology views the economy as an elemental part, or process of society.

Sociology recognizes two main conceptions of society, as well as two main conceptions of the economy. In one, the Durkheimian view, the economy is defined through the “division of labor”, while in the other, as Weber conceptualizes it, it is the focus of rationality (Polanyi, 1957).

The unifying principle, which underlies the previous literature, is that the informal sector arises from the capital-limited nature of the economy (Gibson and Kelley, 1994). From the Weberian perspective, it may be assumed that were capital not in short supply, all activity would be formal. Capitalists who, by definition, require an average rate of return will not operate informal sector processes. Ultimately, the economy is limited exogenously given level of demand, which forces unemployed workers into the informal sector. However, the informal economy grows at the expense of the formal. Over the last 150 to 200 years increase in production has been associated with technological development and large-scale organization. Today this trend is coming to an end. Technology reduces production cost, making it, more efficient and more profitable. The cost of services is rising faster than the cost of industry thanks to low growth of productivity: consequently, informal production procedures are once more likely to surface.

There is no generally accepted theory for the informal sector and certainly none which can account for all its essential characteristics, including the following:

1. The growth of the informal economy is linked to conditions of capitalist development.
2. The technologies employed by the informal sector cannot be characterized easily, except that they tend to be labor saving on the whole (Gibson and Kelley, 1994).

According to Weber in order to attain maximum formal rationality in an economic system the following essential conditions must be met:

1. There ought to exist essentially unrestricted struggle between autonomous economic groups in the market. This amounts, in Weber's own words, to an economic version of the Darwinist principle of the 'struggle of man against man'. This is to say that only competition can decide economic success or economic failure.
2. There ought to exist formally free labor, that is, the workers are entitled to sell their working capacity freely in the market, and the entrepreneurs, on their part, are entitled to dispose of the labor of the workers whenever they think necessary.
3. One further prerequisite is the separation of the workers from the means of production. They must be dependent on the chance to seek earnings through labor only. This is to say, of course, that the appropriation of the means of production by the owners is to be protected by force (Weber, 1964).

In the Weberian formula, owners have full control over non-human means of production, i.e., machines, land, and capital. On the other hand, they have no control over the human agents of production, i.e. "formally free" labor. Since production is carried on in complex organizations and not by isolated individuals, workers are separated from the control of the means of production. Workers can only sell their labor for survival.

Weber's conception of the rationality of the modern social order is a conception of the rationality of individual action. Insofar as the individual is not self-conscious and a deliberate author of his/her action, insofar as he/she is carried along by habit or carried away by feelings to this extent, his/her action is non-rational. Insofar as the individual acts deliberately and is consciously aware of what he/she is doing, on the other hand,

his/her action is rational (Brubaker, 1984). The supply of one's skill on the market depends on the need for self-realization, which is denied in the formal economy. Informal, non-market activities, such as voluntary social work, are also individual choices of commitment.

Where action is rational, this type of action will take place so far as, according to the actor's estimate, the urgency of his/her demand for expected result of his/her action (Weber, 1964). In the informal economy women want to engage in the formal sector but the system prevents them from doing so; thus they have had to invent ways of surviving outside the law or system of regulation (i.e. through the informal sector).

Women involved in the informal economy are aware of their situations. Many times women get paid less in the formal economy than in the informal economy. Findings actually indicate that earnings in the informal sector are higher for women than earnings in the formal sector. For many women the higher earnings available in the informal economy are more desirable than those available in the formal sector, particularly when looking at short term benefits (Kumbetoglu, 1993). For instance, White (1992) reports that while male factory--or construction workers-- might earn from 80,000-90,000 TL (\$54) a month, their home working wives may make anywhere from 80,000- 200,000 TL (\$54-\$134) a month. For these women their behavior represent rational economic action.

Formal sector jobs are defined as being in the organized sectors and are subject to minimum wage legislation. In addition, these jobs must provide health insurance and retirement benefits. Given these costs, many business owners prefer working with people

from the informal labor force. Formal sector firms defend their reliance on the informal sector by observing that labor costs can be cut by using home workers, sweatshops, street vendors, neighborhood shopkeepers and others (Portes and Walton, 1981). The informal economy has become an alternative for women in Third World countries whose economies experience crisis, since it provides them with the means to feed their families under severe economic constraints.

Everybody tries building his/her own center like “individual ownership”, as Weber said. The economic actor is assumed to have a given and stable set of preferences and chooses the alternative line of action which maximizes utility (individual) or profit (firm). In economic theory this way of acting constitutes economically rational action. Informality provides a means for economic survival. Women have a reason to elect the informal sector over the formal sector. Consequently, homework becomes a realistic choice for married women seeking income-generating activities.

METHODOLOGY

Among the many methods available to researchers for collecting information on the social world, secondary data analysis provides a mechanism through which the researcher analyzes data and information already obtained and archived. Researchers can search through collections of information with specific research questions and variables in mind and can then reassemble the information in ways that address their research question (Neuman, 1999).

Although existing statistics may not fit neatly into a deductive model of research design, researchers can create analytical variables by reorganizing the existing information. Using existing statistical data is appropriate when a researcher wants to test hypotheses involving data found in official reports of social, economic, and political conditions. Gilbert (1993) mentions that most developed countries have centrally funded data archives, in which are deposited data from hundreds or thousands of surveys, in order that they may be reanalyzed by other researchers who have new ideas to test out on old data.

Secondary analysis is a form of analysis that makes use of existing statistics. It is the reanalysis of previously collected survey or other data, originally gathered for other purposes. Neuman (1999) states that, secondary analysis is increasingly performed by researchers. It is relatively inexpensive, it facilitates replication, and it permits asking about issues not thought of by the original researcher. In 1998, Almgren and associates used existing data for their research project. They matched census data for 1970 and 1990

with birth and death records for 75 communities and examined the association between unemployment rates of violent death rates in the communities (relevant reference see Almgren, G., A. Guest, Imerwahr, G. and Micheal Spittel 1998. Joblessness, family disruption and violent death in Chicago, 1970-1990. *Social Forces*, 76:1465-1494). Trovato (1998) used existing statistics to test a theory from Emile Durkheim's theory on social integration (relevant reference see Trovato, F. 1998. The Stanley cup hockey and suicide in Quebec, 1951-1992. *Social Forces*, 77:105-126).

The methodology of this paper hinges on the use of two types of data. These two types of data consist of group and aggregate level data drawn from official Turkish documents such as census data and official reports i.e. the World Bank. The other is individual level data drawn from three research studies based on survey findings administered to individual respondents. In conducting secondary data analysis one must not only consider distinctions between data sets, but also differences between types of data level, i.e. group, aggregate or individual level. Also recognized are differences in ideological perspectives that may underline official government studies and those of private researchers (Hakim, 1993).

Using the above data five questions are put forth: Why do women deny themselves involvement in economic activities? How do women describe their involvement in the informal economy? Why are women excluded from official statistics? Why do they choose involvement in the informal economy? Finally, How do husbands feel about their wives' being involved in income-generating activities? Throughout this thesis, I have elaborated on the various aspects of my theoretical perspective. These aspects include both social structure (demographic changes, urbanization, economy, and

politics) and culture (religion and gender construction). The use of secondary data to answer questions can clarify the theoretical perspective raised from the available data. Using secondary data to answer questions, I have retrospectively asked questions that link the conceptual theory to the questions that I asked. The questions mediate the conceptual theory of the thesis. The connection between the theoretical perspective and the postulated questions will be clarified in the data analysis. I will elaborate on both social structure and culture by looking at specific questions that illustrate women's involvement in the informal economy in Turkey.

I will use data gathered by the Turkish Statistical Institute 1955, 1990 and October 1994 reports, the World Bank Country Study of 1991, and TUSIAD report on Istanbul of 1991. I will also try to ascertain gaps in the official statistics. For instance, the use of the term "work", reveals that new interpretations are necessary. Although women define themselves as "housewives" and under-employed, many times they are actually involved in the informal sector. Considerations of increasing urbanization (the proportion of population living in urban areas has virtually doubled from 1955 to 1990) and of urban-rural labor force patterns are also important to the growth of the informal economy. For instance, women's participation in agriculture as unpaid family workers was very high in 1955, but that number has begun to decline in the past 20 years. From the existing data, I also found that internal migration and women's participation in the informal economy are positively correlated. Because Turkish official reports and censuses are

periodically obtained, I was able to examine these data longitudinally. By examining the data longitudinally, I could observe that official Turkish statistics reveal that women's participation in the labor force decreased tremendously over time; this suggests that other social phenomena are taking place.

Limitations of Study

Existing statistics and secondary data are by no means trouble free. Many documents used in social research were produced with specific goals and purposes (which can bias them in many ways). This makes it all the more important to consider carefully all possible sources of bias that might have been at work in the gathering of data and in its original interpretation.

Another concern is how the availability of specific information can restrict the researcher's questions. The non-reactive variables often have weaker validity because they do not always necessarily address the particular questions the researcher has in mind. Nevertheless, non-reactive research techniques can be advantageous. One such advantage of non-reactive research is when subjects are inaccessible to the researcher (in my case, being out of the field). However, there are also disadvantages the researcher must be aware of. With these limitations in mind, the following chapter I will discuss my findings and will also analyze the secondary data.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

TURKISH WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY

Having gained an understanding of the general concepts applicable to the informal economy and of the Turkish economy, specifically, I suggest that Turkish women have been marginalized in the economy and I offer data to support how women's income-generating activities have become an active economic component of the Turkish economy. My data analysis will also be informed by my personal understanding of Turkish culture.

Although there is not much statistical data available, it is evident that homework is extensive in the working-class district of Istanbul. First, Cinar (1989) attempted to research the extent of homework in Turkey (Bursa and Istanbul). Later, White (1992) and Kumbetoglu (1992) elaborated on women's labor in the informal economy in Istanbul. The data analysis presented below has been specifically organized to address five questions derived from a careful analysis of the available information. The connection between the theoretical perspective and the postulated questions will be explained in this section.

Why do women deny their involvement in the informal economy?

The family is not the only institution that helps shape women's employment in Turkey. There are also many other institutions, for instance, religion, education, and government, affecting women's participation in the labor force. White (1992) states that government programs and media discourse encourage women to be both "good Muslim wives" and to contribute to their families by working. In studies by Cinar (1989), Kumbetoglu (1992), and White (1992), women usually define themselves as "housewives" even if they are involved in many economic activities which provide income for their families. Cultural conceptions about women's roles prevent many women from working outside the home. Women were trained by their parents to keep the home a place of harmony and comfort. If a woman moves out of the "woman's sphere", this harmony and comfort is thought to be endangered.

How do women describe their involvement in the informal economy?

Most women in Istanbul considered piecework, or some kind of income generating activities, as a hobby to get extra pocket money. Cinar (1989:10) notes, for example, in her 1989 surveys of female home workers in urban Turkey, that the women in her samples work an average of four years. Nevertheless, none of the women "took their work seriously or considered themselves as working".

White (1992) adds to this that women in the informal economy do not see income-producing activities such as piecework or labor in *ateliers* (sweatshop) as real work. They themselves insist on this distinction: In their own words, they “do” this and they “give (the product) out”; but they do not “work”.

In Kumbetoglu’s study (1992) respondents indicated that women did not distinguish their paid activities from their unpaid domestic tasks. Women referred to their paid work as household labor, and did not distinguish between their domestic duties and income-generating activities. They thought that “work” could only be identified with working outside the home. When activities are done at home, they are outside the work sphere. Rather, the women regarded their income-generating work as part of an ideology that women should not sit idle, and that they should do useful things in their free time.

Women also share the cultural ideology and believe that it is bad for women to work (or work out of the house). For this reason, they often deny that they are working even if they are. The cultural ideology perpetuates this by viewing women only as wives or mothers and not as wage earners. This cultural pattern emphasizes the idea of the male provider, this role dictates that the husband is expected to support his family; women, therefore, should remain in the home. Women’s work also has been regarded as an extension of femininity by the culture.

Why are women excluded from official statistics?

In many surveys and census questions, “work” is not distinctly defined, hence, many women do not include themselves in the labor force. The SIS (1994) survey also included unpaid family workers in their “underemployed” category. According to the HLFS October 1994 survey, 5.4 % of women were claimed as “underemployed”. These could also be included in the category of “ marginal worker”. Women not in the labor force are categorized as “ housewives”. In addition, 72.4 % of the women were outside the labor force in the urban area and 70.2 % of the respondents said this was because they were “being housewives”. As already mentioned, women themselves do not consider their activities as work, therefore documentation of women’s involvement in the labor force is difficult to obtain and remains, at best, only an estimate.

Another reason why women’s work in the informal economy is viewed as a marginal activity and not shown in the official labor statistics is because many women are reluctant to define their activities as work. It could also be due to the fear that admitting income-producing activities to an official government representative might bring higher taxes or other negative consequences (White, 1992).

Why do women choose involvement in the informal economy?

Kumbetoglu (1992) argues that, women's work in the informal economy and their household duties are related. Domestic duties influence and dictate where women choose to work such as close to home so they can continue with their domestic duties. Work alternatives and women's roles are usually structured by the domestic sphere. The distinction between the private and the public sphere or the domestic and the public is remindful of Rosaldo's explanation of gender inequality (O'Kelly, 1980). Being a "good mother" and "good wife" is highly valued. Women's labor within the home, or the domestic sphere, is defined as fulfilling the most necessary function that a woman can perform on behalf of the household. However, financial struggles force women to increase their economic options and find viable economic alternatives and solutions. Kumbetoglu's (1992) and White's (1992) research shed light on this issue. For instance, they ask women the question, What is your primary aim in working at home? The main answer given was to provide some additional income since their husband's incomes were inadequate. One woman said: "I have to feed my children and how do I dare tell my children that there is not enough food today" (Kumbetoglu, 1992:87).

Kumbetoglu (1992) interviewed a total of 62 women in 1992. The 62 women were between the ages of 16 and 65; 71% of the women were married and had on average 3 children. Most had come to Istanbul in the last 20 years. Kumbetoglu stated that the number of children is positively correlated with informal activity. Studies have indicated that women with higher numbers of children prefer working in the informal sector so they

can earn an income while maintaining their domestic duties (Jelin, 1984; Norris, 1985; Hansen, 1987; Roldan, 1988; Pennington and Westover, 1989). Having children limits women's mobility in the labor market and their alternatives in searching for better-paid jobs. The majority of women in the sample commented that the major reason they work was to cover their children's needs and that home working was the best way of doing this. Kumbetoglu's (1992) data indicate that 51.6 % of women reported that the reason for working at home was associated with "women's responsibilities" related to household, children and obedience to their husbands. Seventy-one percent of the women in the sample stated that because of motherhood and their husbands' resistance to their working outside the home, they preferred to do this kind of work. Sixteen percent of the women implied that "homework" type of work is their only option because their educational credentials are thought to be of little use in the outside world. Evidently, the main reason for women becoming involved in income-generating activities is the general decline of the family's economic situation. Supporting a reasonable standard of living becomes difficult, especially in a situation of high inflation.

When reviewing the proportion of women in the Turkish labor force, I find national statistics showing a constant decline after the 1950's (SPO 1985). According to surveys by the Turkish State Institute of Statistics (SIS, 1994) and the World Bank Report (1991), women's agricultural participation in the labor force remained high in the 1950s, thus accounting for inflated figures that indicated that 70% of women were in the labor force in 1955. By 1994, however, given the decline of the agricultural sector and the massive migration to urban areas that this implied, only 28.9 % of women remain active in the labor force. A comparison of the participation pattern in Turkey with that of

three other southern European OECD countries (Greece, Portugal, Spain) suggests that this decline is only temporary and that Turkey is likely to experience a secular upturn in female participation. According to the October 1994 Household Labor Force Survey, in Turkish urban areas the participation rate of women in the formal labor force is 16.2 %. As for employment status, 63.6 % of women in the labor force were unpaid family workers and 28.9 % were wage earners, compared to 14.1% of men who were unpaid and 72 % who were wage earners (SIS, 1994). Analysis of data by occupation show women concentrated in the lower occupational categories and to be performing work closely related to their traditional household duties.

Since the women themselves do not define their activities as work, documentation of women's participation in the economy is difficult to adequately assess. The Household Labor Force Survey of 1990 reported that the percentage of women working in marginal activities was approximately 54 %; on the other hand, men's participation was 45.9 % (Kumbetoglu, 1992).

The 1990 SIS survey shows that half of the women workers in the urban informal sector were engaged in manufacturing, 40.4 % of them in service and only 5.2 % in trade. The same survey indicated that women are less mobile than men in this sector. The data underline the importance of working at home for women. The difference between women's and men's participation in the informal sector is a result of the general situation of women in Turkish society and is related to gender biased evaluations of their work.

Women are expected to remain in the home and many work activities are not considered appropriate for their roles. Structural factors are also important. Women are less educated, have fewer formal labor market skills, and have domestic responsibilities limiting their participation in the work sphere outside the home.

Turkish women usually find employment opportunities in the informal sector. One reason for this was the women's lower levels of education and literacy. Additionally, available jobs in the formal sector have historically gone to men. According to the TUSIAD report 31.77 % of females were illiterate, compared to 13.45 % male illiteracy in Istanbul. Illiteracy and low level of education are among the most important characteristics of women in this sector because, in addition to the other factors, they are major impediments to participation in formal sector employment (pp.69). According to the SIS survey (October 1994), 49.5 % of illiterate men participate in the urban labor force, whereas in contrast 6.6% of illiterate women do. In Kumbetoglu's (1992) inquiry female respondents were asked why they worked within the home, and they responded that there were no jobs for women with little schooling, and even if there were, their husbands would not give them permission to work because children and housework would suffer. They kept up the usual household tasks in the morning, afternoon and evening because house keeping standards should not be permitted to suffer. They wanted their families to live in comfort. In their view, achieving harmony and comfort was only possible with women's selfless efforts in the home.

How do husbands feel about their wives' being involved in the income-generating activities?

Husbands are against women traveling to other areas to find work. When women were asked what difficulties they experience in their work, they replied that their husbands did not like them working very much and always resisted it. Cinar (1989:16) reported that, “ husbands are not willing to accept that their wives' earnings make a difference in their family's standard of living.” According to husbands, “their (wives) job is to do housework; earning money is men's business; they say that when women earn money, their voices get louder in the home; they talk more”(Cinar 1989: 19).

For women, working outside the home invites disapproval from their husbands. According to Kumbetoglu's (1992) research 83.8 % of the husbands approved of women working at home, if the women were not to neglect their main responsibilities. Seventy-one percent of husbands approved of their wives' working at home, 6.5 % of them gave conditional approval, and only 16.1 % of husbands were against homework. Men at every educational level were against their wives' going out to work. This emphasized the importance of traditional cultural values.

The women adhere to the fiction that they are not “ working”, only “doing” and “giving out” products to distributors. This allows them to avoid the responsibility of being considered a woman who has economic dealings with strangers, a woman who has to “work,” demonstrating that her husband is not able to support his family financially. The latter, according to men, dishonors the family as a whole, including the woman.

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Women's work outside the home is evaluated in terms of honor. It is thought that travelling to work and working with other men is particularly unsuitable for women because of the danger to their honor posed by strange men. This adversely affects husbands' prestige in the residential districts (White, 1992).

Both women and men perceived the woman's primary duty as child-care giver and domestic worker. Both understood that women must get permission from their husband to begin work outside of these activities. To do so, they must persuade their husbands that the household tasks would not be neglected.

Through analysis of previously compiled statistics and secondary data, I have described how family, work, social roles, education, and women's level of involvement are affected by the cultural gender construction. I suggest that such a situation reflects deeply ingrained cultural values and norms towards women, for instance women's role as wives and mothers. Women's educational level and reproductive status were found to be directly correlated with participation in the informal labor market. Husbands' approval still greatly impacts women's decision to work. In the following chapter I will provide a general summary of the study and offer some conclusions.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Women are very restricted by the traditional culture and structure of Turkish society. This research found the “housewife” role to be the most important role among Turkish women involved in the informal economy. However, developing economic conditions in Turkey make it necessary for low-income women to perform paid work. Turkish women involved in the informal economy do not receive the same opportunities as men. Women often indicate their acceptance of men’s role as breadwinners and women’s role as good mothers and wives. More than 68 % of women in urban areas work in the informal economy (Kumbetoglu, 1993). Nevertheless, most working women do not overtly identify themselves as working because they still accept the importance of traditional gender roles (i.e., mother and wife).

In the first part of Chapter One, I presented my theoretical model and throughout the remaining chapters, I discussed major issues relating to women’s labor within the informal economy. In reviewing the major issues noted above it is possible to observe that having small children and low-education level impact women’s involvement in the informal economy. The second part of Chapter One included studies focusing on general definitions and theories relating to the informal economy. This part dealt with the definition, the nature of, and the characteristics of the informal economy in developing countries.

Early in Chapter Two, I elaborated on the Turkish economy between 1955 and 1990, presenting a detailed economic history. A review of the economic data presented here indicates the existences of a high concentration of women in the informal economy. In the second part of Chapter Two, I then introduced cultural definitions that shape gender identity in Turkish society, explaining, how institutions (i.e. family, government) shape the cultural and traditional ideology of Turkish women.

In Chapter Three, I attempted to explain the relation between the Weberian conceptualization of economic action and women's income-generating activities which led me to conceptualize the role of these women as those of active economic agents in Turkey. From this point of view, women are not out of the economic sphere, instead, they are very much part of the economy. Although official statistics usually underestimate female participation in the economy, this does not mean that it does not exist. Although women often earn less than a proportionate share of the total household income funds, they still contribute to the total household income. Women work, and the product of their labor has an impact on the economy.

In Chapter Four, I attempted to characterize women's labor based on existing official statistics and secondary data. The percentage of women engaged in the informal economy is very high. In addition to supporting the family with their income generating activities, women are fully engaged in more traditional types of work. Because of the cultural ideology of gender and work, many women do not consider as work their marginal economic activities.

Given declining family incomes and high rates of inflation, women choose to solve their survival problems by participating in the informal economy. They are unable to participate in the formal sector primarily because of low educational levels, lack of husband's permission, and responsibilities to domestic duties. These constraints and social conditions tend to make it more difficult for women to find work in the formal sector. A common misconception is that women do paid homework because they want to fill up their free time.

The major contribution of this thesis is that it attempts to integrate diverse sources of data such as those found in official documents and reports and social science findings in analyzing the involvement of Turkish women in the informal economy. Given that the thesis relies exclusively on secondary analysis, it does not pretend to offer a totally novel approach to the already widely researched subject of the informal economy. The emphasis throughout has been on integrating wide data sources. In order to accomplish this objective I developed a conceptual model that proposes linkages between and among diverse variables. This is accomplished through a theoretical model that brings together structural and cultural variables.

Previously, researchers such as Cinar (1989), Kumbetoglu (1992), and White (1992) have analyzed the participation of Turkish women in the informal economy. The existence of informal activities has been formally acknowledged by the Turkish statistical institute. I brought together available information and offered a new perspective on this theme. Through the integration of available data and the proposed model, some plausible conclusions are obtained. To wit, given the continuous migration experienced throughout the last four decades in Turkey, migration from rural to urban areas will continue and this

will have profound effects on urban areas, such as high rate of unemployment. In addition, as already discussed, a historical pattern of unstable governments and uncertain governmental policies will continue to negatively affect the economy. As the model suggests, cultural pressures placed on women's roles in Turkish society will continue. Such conditions will continue to exacerbate the roles played by Turkish women within the household and economic sector. Such pressures lead to an increase in the cultural stressors experienced by Turkish women bringing about a situation similar to what Bourdieu* defines as symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1979).

Given current structural conditions, such as the ones discussed here, and the very slow cultural transformation of gender roles in today's Turkey, it is suggested that these cultural and social structural factors will continue to negatively affect the economic involvement of Turkish women in the first decades of the new millenium. Hence, women will continue to participate in the informal labor market. Following Weber, I have suggested that their involvement in the informal economy is the best rational alternative in response to economic strains. As already noted, Turkish women who migrate to urban areas are limited by low educational attainment. This educational deficit seriously constraints their possibilities of working in the formal sector. These structural conditions coupled with the cultural "domesticity" role imposed on wives and mothers will continue

* Symbolic violence, the gentle, invisible form of violence, which is never recognized as such, and is not so much undergone as chosen, the violence of credit, confidence, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gifts, gratitude, piety—in short, all the virtues honored by the code of honor (Bourdieu, 1979: 192).

to force women into the informal economy. Thus, it is possible to conclude by noting that the economic incorporation of Turkish women will continue at an accelerated pace in the immediate future, but tragically because of cultural and socio-structural constraints, their incorporation into the Turkish economic sector will remain largely within the informal sector.

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EDUCATION

Fall 1998 to present

Department of Sociology, The UNIVERSITY OF
TEXAS - PAN AMERICAN, Edinburg, Texas
Master of Science - Sociology (Degree Expected:
Aug 2000).

Fall 1992 - 1996

MIMAR SINAN UNIVERSITY, ISTANBUL, TURKEY
Bachelor of Science in Sociology.

ACADEMIC AWARDS & HONORS

1999 - present

Research Assistant - Minority Biomedical
Research Support Grant, The University of
Texas - Pan American, Edinburg, Texas.

1998

Academic Scholarship - Department of
Sociology University of Texas - Pan American,
Edinburg, Texas.

1992 - 1996

Honor: Top Student in Class (In all four years of
undergraduate education).
Mimar Sinan University, Istanbul, Turkey.

LANGUAGES

Turkish and English.

CONFERENCES ATTENDED

November 1999

52nd Annual Scientific meeting of the Gerontological Society of America, San Francisco, California.

Poster Session: "Mental Health and Disability Status of the Diabetic Older Mexican American." (Interpreted data, constructed graphs for the conference and answered queries during the conference).

WORK EXPERIENCE

May 1999 - Present

Research Assistant: Minority Biomedical Research Support Program (National Institute of Health funded grant), University of Texas Pan American, Edinburg, Texas.

Duties: data input, and the preparation of data for conference presentations, and administrative duties.

Fall 1999

Teaching Assistant for Dr. Elena Bastida in "Gender and Society". Department of Sociology, The University of Texas-Pan American.

Aug 1996 to Jan 1997

Internship: Image Public Relations, 4th Levent, Istanbul, Turkey.

Duties: Assist Public Relations Manager with promotional campaigns .

Oct 1995 - Dec 1995

Survey Administrator: Piar Gallup Company (Gallup poll). Istanbul, Turkey.

Duties: Interviewing Corporate CEO's on political issues.

COMPUTER SKILLS

Skilled in Microsoft Word, Excel, Windows, Power Point, and SPSS.